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MASCULINE DOMESTICITY IN THE MINING WEST:
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION AT COLOMA GHOST TOWN

By

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Thesis

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Masculine Domesticity in the Mining West: An Archaeological Investigation at Coloma Ghost Town

Chairperson: Dr. Kelly Dixon

The recovery of a scorifier, or roasting dish, at Feature 131 in Coloma, Montana led to the theory that the feature represented an assayer's household. Historical documentation, in the form of a personal diary, revealed that the assayer at Coloma, Chester Pray, shared a cabin with another man. This revelation led to a particular question: what would the material record of an all-male household look like? The majority of previous engendered investigations into 19th century households focused on the role of women. Gender is often equated with women in historical and archaeological studies, and it became necessary to integrate literature from masculinity studies in order to put the artifacts from Feature 131 into a full context. Although results from the archaeological data in this case were inconclusive, the compilation of literature from household archaeology, engendered archaeology, history, and masculinity studies in this thesis will be useful for any historical archaeologist working on sites in the mining West.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In the summer of 1933 Hilma Hanson returned to the mining town of Coloma, Montana for the first time in 35 years. She had worked as the mining town's schoolteacher from 1897 until 1898, right in the middle of the community's mining boom. What she saw when she returned was a repopulated ghost town, as the Depression drove the unemployed and desperate back into the mountains in search of gold. Hanson described her joy at finding "things just as they were left except for ravages made by time" (Kimbal 1933).

The ravages of time are even more apparent in Coloma today, and one can only speculate what Hilma's reaction would be to the crumbling ghost town in its present state. Existing buildings have collapsed in on themselves, with many structures gone altogether, probably salvaged for lumber. Bottle hunters and other recreationalists have left their mark, some carrying valuable evidence away with them. Nature has also taken its toll, in the form of lightning, snow, and foliage.

A combination of these forces contributed to the formation of Feature 131, which appeared in 2007 as a rectangular depression at the top of a hill next to a stone hearth. Upon closer inspection, the sill logs of a structure could be seen beneath a dense growth of plants and small trees. In the summer of 2007, University of Montana field school students began removing vegetation from the surface of the feature and excavating through the remains of the floorboards.

While the original goal of this investigation was the more general task of identifying the use of the structure, the artifacts recovered in this season led to some interesting questions. When students identified an artifact associated with assaying—a

scorifier, or roasting dish—it was speculated that the structure may have been an assaying office or at least the residence of an assayer. Hilma Hanson’s “Journal of Remembrances” mentioned Chester Pray, the Coloma assayer who worked in the Mammoth mining office. Hanson recalled that Pray, who claimed to be a Harvard man, shared a cabin with David Morgan, an attorney who ran the mining company’s general store.

The scorifier recovered from Feature 131 was, at the time, the only material evidence of assaying found at Coloma. If Feature 131 did represent an assayer’s residence, then there was a good chance that it was also a single-gendered (homosocial) household, presumably occupied by Chester Pray and David Morgan. This line of reasoning led to some interesting questions about what the material record of an all-male household would look like. Engendered archaeology often requires one to search for evidence of the presence of women. But what sort of material record would indicate the presence of men?

To begin to answer this question, one would need historical evidence describing men’s domestic activities. The research in this area is limited, and seems to be nearly non-existent within historical archaeology. The first reason for this oversight is the uncritical application of the Victorian notion of “separate spheres” to the analysis of household and community structure. Within this framework, space is divided into the “public” male sphere and the “private” female sphere. This “private” sphere has long been associated with the physical space within the home, that is, within individual households (e.g., Marsh 1988, Vickery 1993). Household archaeology focuses on

excavations of this space within the home, often comparing artifacts from several households in order to understand variability based on gender and socioeconomic status.

This adoption of prescriptive ideology as everyday reality can severely limit household archaeology, as the household is equated with the feminine. Instead of questioning the extent to which the separate spheres ideology structured domestic life, research into gender has often been limited to questions about the agency of women within their domestic constraints. Many have noted those women who infiltrated the “male” sphere of public life (e.g., Stange 2005, Seifert 1991), but there has been little research in the other direction: the role of men within the domestic sphere.

This absence of men is not limited to household archaeology, but permeates engendered archaeology as a whole. It was not until the 1980s that serious attention was given to men’s gender, and theories of masculinity were incorporated into Women’s Studies and History literature. This literature is often overlooked, however, by historical archaeologists; most resources aimed at archaeologists studying gender in the 19th century do not address masculinity at all (e.g., Rotman 2009).

Thus, I have two main goals for this thesis. The first is to bring attention to the need for incorporation of masculinity studies into engendered archaeology. My expectation is that this paper may provide a resource for masculinity research, presented in a way that is useful for archaeologists. The second goal is to use this literature in an attempt to say something about the people who lived at Feature 131. The analysis of Feature 131 and its associated dump (Feature 177) is an example of household archaeology. By interpreting the material remains from this household in the context of men’s gender strategies, it may be possible to determine the gender of those who

occupied it. Even if this determination is not possible, the focus on men's activities within the home should give greater insight into the domestic lives of those who lived in the American mining West.

The next chapter (Chapter 2) will provide historical context pertaining to the West's gold rushes, as well as the settlement of Coloma, Montana. Chapter 3 is a summary of the literature used to inform my interpretation of Features 131 and 177- research related to household archaeology, engendered archaeology, and masculinity studies. In Chapter 4, I lay out the methods used (field, laboratory, and research) in the archaeological investigation of Features 131 and 177. Chapter 5 presents the results of the excavation and artifact analysis, as well as a discussion on the significance of these results. Chapter 6 outlines my conclusions and final thoughts about this investigation.

Chapter 2: Historical Context

Gold Fever in the American West

The story of Coloma is best understood as part of a global craze driving large masses of people to establish makeshift communities dependent on the availability of one resource- gold. The spark that ignited gold fever began with the California Gold Rush, which was instigated by John W. Marshall in 1848. Marshall was constructing a sawmill on the American River in California, and in the process exposed a streambed rich with gold (Bryans 1988). Within six months, prospectors were travelling from as far as Australia and South America to take part in the hunt for riches (Bryans 1988:11).

By 1851 other gold rushes had spread to Australia and New Zealand, in 1858 to Canada, and to South Africa by 1868. In the United States the rush leapfrogged across the interior west, and by 1896 the Alaskan Klondike was being claimed by the second generation of gold seekers (Lawrence 2000). Gold fever was a powerful motivator, as is reflected in the population booms of gold-rich regions. For example, in 1848 only 400 eastern American migrants chose to settle in California. In 1849 the gold drove in 90,000 (Lawrence 1999:124).

The California Gold Rush's initial impact on Montana was an indirect one. The mass exodus of settlers moving into the American West included the priests of St. Mary's Mission, leading to the establishment of Fort Owen on the former mission grounds. John Owen established Fort Owen after buying it from the Jesuit priests. Owen profited from the rush when he discovered that pack animals weary from travelling the California Trail could be bought cheaply and rehabilitated on the grass of the Bitterroot Valley, then sold

at a substantial profit (Cushman 1973: 11). Many Montanans profited by supplying those on the move (Cushman 1973: 11). By 1852, prospectors were testing Montana streams on their way from rush to rush, but nothing enticing was found (Cushman 1973: 11).

Despite the negative reports of these early prospectors, evidence for Montana's mineral wealth had already been suggested as far back as 1739 when the French government learned about mineral deposits within the territory (*Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 1964). Nevertheless, credit for the first official report is given to the Lewis and Clark party, but it is generally accepted that local fur traders and explorers were aware of the abundance of metals in Montana, and kept their knowledge secret for practical reasons (*Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 1964). John Owen's own diary contains an entry (possibly not in Owen's own hand) from 1852 stating that he had found "some" gold (*Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 1964).

In July of 1862 the first major gold strike in Montana occurred on Grasshopper Creek. News of this strike brought prospectors from every direction, leading to the establishment of Bannack. By the spring of 1863, Bannack had a population of nearly 1000 and by 1864 it became Montana's first territorial capital, producing nearly 5 million dollars worth of ore (*Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 1964). This title was quickly transferred to Virginia City, which held even more deposits and which boasted about 10,000 inhabitants between 1864 and 1869 (*Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 1964). Always on the move, some gold seekers left from Virginia City in 1863 and struck paydirt in what was soon to be Helena, which was made territorial capital in 1875 (and then state capital in 1889) (*Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 1964).

Gold Mining in the Garnet Range: Coloma, Montana

Coloma was part of the last of Montana's big gold booms, although its name was likely derived from the location near the American River in California where the gold rush had its origin. It should be noted that many early maps and references to the town referred to it as "Colona", and this is as yet unexplained. In 1865, gold was found at Bear Creek, just off the Mullan Road and about seven miles south of Coloma (Cushman 1964:39). Placer miners worked the gulch until all free gold seemed to be depleted, by about 1868. Within these 3 years Beartown was established, having at one point a population of about 1,000, with probably 4,000 more in the surrounding gulches (Cushman 1964:40). It is estimated that between 1865 and 1915 one to two million dollars worth of gold was removed from Bear Creek and nearby Elk Creek (Timmons 2009).

Unlike other Montana placer camps, such as Bannack and Helena, hard-rock miners did not immediately rush in to drain the mother lode that fed the Bear Creek deposits. One of the first quartz claims on The Mammoth Lode, the lode that later supported the establishment of Coloma, was made in 1868 by J.E. Van Gundy. The quartz workings, however, were mostly abandoned in favor of placer mining in Washoe Gulch, just a few hundred feet away. Lack of water, however, allowed for only a few weeks of mining each spring (Timmons 2009).

The mining in the area seems to have continued in this way until Bror A.C. Stone developed his mine, The Haparanda, in 1886. Stone recovered about 10,000 dollars worth of ore from his gold-in-quartz mine and mill, calling attention to the untapped wealth in the district. Falling silver prices meant renewed interest in gold, and investors from

Chicago decided it was worth the risk to form a corporation and purchase the Mammoth Mining Claim (Cushman 1964:41). The Mammoth Gold Mining Company was active in Coloma, on and off, from 1893 until 1933 (Timmons 2009). The managers of the Mammoth were mostly located in nearby Deer Lodge, and by October of 1894 they had purchased a ten-stamp mill to process the ore being retrieved from their property. The findings were promising, as earlier in the year they had uncovered two pay streaks, each about 4 feet wide, averaging 47-66 dollars in gold per ton of ore (Timmons 2009).

By 1895, Coloma was coming into its own, with claims worked by individuals as well as corporate employees. Mammoth Mining Company had constructed a boardinghouse, a company store, and a blacksmith shop. There was also a general store, saloons, a meat market, and a “first-class” restaurant where a meal could be obtained for fifty cents (Timmons 2009). A post office was also established in 1895, and the postmistress, Anna Richards, was also a notary and sold some goods at the office. The level of competition was considered impressive for the relatively small population of Coloma (Timmons 2009). The post office remained open, albeit sporadically, until 1908, when it permanently closed its doors.

Also in 1895, Arthur Browne (a mining expert), was dispatched from Boston to inspect the Mammoth’s mines and stamp mill. He discovered that the mill was losing a considerable amount of gold in the tailings. By making a few adjustments to the workings of the mill, he estimated that 80 percent of the value of the ore was saved (Timmons 2009). This milling error was merely a hint at the disaster of mismanagement the Mammoth would become. Within a month of Browne’s visit, the Mammoth was closed due to money problems, and no substantial work was done until the next year. Between

1896 and 1899 money was pumped into the Mammoth mine and mill, but no records of ore production have been found. It is thought that mill itself was still not being run properly, and that a great majority of the gold pulled out of the ground remained in the tailings piles (Timmons 2009).

In spite of these corporate and technical missteps, Coloma seems to have flourished between 1896 and 1899. Those driven to search for wealth on the mountainside were, luckily, not entirely dependent on the expertise of the Mammoth Mining Corporation. Other mining claims, such as the Clemantha, the Valley, and the Rambler were actively worked by local claimholders (Timmons 2009). By 1897, money was raised to employ a schoolteacher for Coloma's children, and a schoolhouse was constructed. Money was raised for three months' salary, and Margaret Loughran of Butte was employed as the first teacher. The school was reportedly attended by 21 children, filling the small schoolhouse. Hilma Hanson, a recent graduate from Butte, took over for Loughran after the initial three-month term ended (Timmons 2009).

During this time another boardinghouse was constructed by J.W. Moss, owner of the general store and part owner of the lucrative Clemantha claim. There was also a hotel, called the Chamberlain house, run by Nellie Chamberlain, who also was part owner of the Valley claim. According to a reporter from the Bear Mountain News in 1898, the citizens of Coloma prided themselves on the opportunities for education and self-improvement present in the little town. While only boasting three saloons, Coloma had its schoolhouse, as well as a library and reading room built by the Mammoth Gold Mining Corporation (Timmons 2009). The idea behind the construction of the library/reading room had come from the mother of the president of the Mammoth Gold Mining

Corporation, Mrs. H. H. Hasmer. The building measured 20ft by 30ft and was filled with nearly 400 books, as well as daily and weekly papers and “magazines of fiction and science” (Timmons 2009). Board games and cards were also provided, under strict rules that no gambling should take place within the building (Timmons 2009).

Hilma Hanson’s “Journal of Remembrances,” which recounts memorable events and people from her stay at Coloma between 1897 and 1898 represents one of the very few written records documenting life at Coloma. Hanson paints a lively picture of the Coloma townspeople, as well as regular visitors such as professional gamblers and travelling salesmen. One of the characters she mentions is Mr. Wassenberg, the town tailor. Mr. Wassenberg, according to Hilma Hanson, was German and had a French wife and two daughters. All the miners of Coloma “ordered tailor-made suits paying \$60 for a suit without hesitation” (Kimbal 1933). The tailor shop was in Wassenberg’s house, and many men would meet there, as Wassenberg was something of a gambler. A Chas. Wassenberg is mentioned by Timmons in his overview of Coloma history as stating an interest in the Rosie Darling claim. If this is indeed the same Wassenberg, he may have also been involved in some prospecting. Wassenberg ran a series of small ads in the *Garnet Mining News* with slogans like, “Wassenberg is a union tailor. When he unites anything stays” (*Garnet Mining News*, Dec. 8, 1898)

Another example of a man concerned with fashion was the Mammoth boardinghouse cook, Charlie Harvey. Apparently Charlie had once been the chef at a “famous New Orleans café” before drinking and gambling forced him into the job of cooking for miners (Kimbal 1933). Hilma fancied him a very attractive man, and he always kept his moustache waxed. She recalls that whenever Charlie attended a dance he

would wear the finest of suits, complete with a cape, silk hat and gloves. He would then proceed to get so drunk that his suit would have to be sent to the cleaners in Missoula.

Coloma as Hilma described it was a very dynamic community. At least 14 children were of school age, although only 12 attended regularly. She accounts for at least three prostitutes who, along with nearly all of the miners, bought tickets to the dance held to raise the funds for the teacher's salary. She tells of Germans, French, Irish, and those from Nova Scotia, New Orleans, and Chicago. Catholics and Protestants were present, although neither type of service seems to have drawn substantial crowds.

The residents of early gold rush mining towns are often considered to be members of "instant populations," and part of an urban frontier. These populations are overwhelmingly young and male and only after a few years of profit—and the introduction of women—would they achieve any level of stability (Massie 1988:16). Coloma, however, as a late addition to the mining landscape in the area, seems to have developed a sort of community stability very early on in its existence. The social environment of Coloma seems to have contrasted with that of Garnet, which was four miles from Coloma by road, or two and one-half miles by trail. For example, for reasons not clearly understood by us today, Hilma Hanson refers to Garnet as a "tough camp" (Kimbal 1933).

When the time came to renew Hilma Hanson's teaching contract, the town organized a fundraising dance. Hilma took a trip down to the Mammoth Mill to sell tickets for two dollars each, and as "miners are always free givers in a good cause," they each bought one (Kimbal 1933). Even one of the two or three Coloma prostitutes left two dollars at the store for Hilma, knowing she would not be allowed to attend (Kimbal

1933). The dance was held at the Mammoth boarding house, and the mining company provided the meal for the function (Kimbal 1933). Even with the relatively small number of schoolchildren present at Coloma, the entire community was evidently invested in maintaining a family-oriented institution.

Hilma Hanson mentioned another interesting character: the assayer, Chester Pray. Chester did his assay work in the mining office, and shared a house with another mining employee, David Morgan, who ran the company grocery store. Both of these men appear to have been eastern upper-middle class transplants: Chester claimed to have been a Harvard man, while Morgan received a law degree from Ann Arbor (Kimbal 1933). Pray's sister, Mrs. Silver of Boston, was said to be a large stockholder in the mine, explaining Pray's appointment in the mining office (Kimbal 1933).

A quick search through Harvard's well-organized archives showed no record of a Chester Pray having attended that institution. Indeed, the picture painted by Hilma of Pray calls into question his character. She describes Morgan and Pray as often "quarreling," while asserting that Morgan was "a very fine man" (Kimbal 1933). Hilma recounts that a travelling salesman would stay in Coloma in order to sell goods to the company store. Morgan purchased a stock of bittersweet chocolates, which he would bring to Hilma whenever he called on her, and refused to sell any to Chester (Kimbal 1933).

These odd statements on Hilma's part piqued my curiosity regarding Chester Pray. This curiosity was satisfied by Nicholas Clapp, who wrote an entire book about the man, entitled, "*Who Killed Chester Pray?*". Communication with the Clapp confirmed

that the Coloma assayer was the same man. Chester, indeed, lied about his affiliations with Harvard, although he grew up very near the University.

Chester Pray had a family connection with mining. His father, Captain Augustus Pray, made a fortune in Glenfield, Nevada supplying Virginia City mines with milled lumber (Clapp 2007:12). Shortly after his father's death, Chester and his mother moved to Cambridgeport, Boston, to live with his aunt and uncle. But his family also had a strong connection with mental illness: Chester's mother suffered from "melancholia," an aunt was "demented" and an uncle and cousin died in an asylum (Clapp 2007:15). Chester himself probably suffered from bipolar disorder, exhibiting both "melancholia" and "mania," hearing voices, and attempting suicide. He spent nearly eight months in an asylum at the age of 17 (Clapp 2007:25).

Shortly after his discharge in 1895, "much improved," from the asylum, Chester Pray boarded a train and headed west. He landed in the mining settlement of Sumpter, Oregon and worked as an assistant to an assayer in exchange for training (Clapp 2007:27). Within three months Chester became a skilled assayer, eventually taking over the shop when the assayer branched out into dry goods (Clapp 2007: 29). At some point after this, in a period of time when Chester disappeared from all historical accounts other than Hilma Hanson's (Nicholas Clapp, personal communication), he landed a job as the assayer in the mining office at Coloma.

Chester's severe mental illness, which led to his suicide in Death Valley in 1913, could explain the strange entries in Hilma's journal, especially his "quarreling" with his housemate. It is possible, with his Boston connections, that Chester's family was involved in getting him the position with the Boston-based Mammoth Mining Company.

Assayers in the Mining West

Dependable assayers played a crucial role in any mining town. The assay office was the first stop for any prospector who believed his samples would prove the discovery of a rich ore deposit. Assayers were also employed to refine bullion or melt down nuggets for a mint, and directed the diggings towards the richest parts of ore bodies at a mine. The mining community “lived and died on assay reports” (Spude 1990:2).

In 1898, Montana had hit its peak with 34 registered assayers (Spude 1990:92). Assayers shared many characteristics with the gold rush miners: they were almost exclusively young, white, male, and highly mobile. Their average age ranged from the late twenties to early thirties. The 1900 census lists 248 females of the 8,887 total “chemists, assayers and metallurgists,” with only a few of these working in the American West (Spude 1990:77). Assayers were distinct from miners, however, in other ways. They were much more likely to be married and have children. Between the 1880s and 1920s, technological advances caused an explosion in the mining industry and changed the way assayers did business. Instead of setting up their own private shops dependent on payment from prospectors for services, the assayers became employees of the mining companies (Spude 1990:41).

Most of these changes took place in the 1890s, as assayers became hired hands instead of independent contractors, making \$3 to \$4 a day on a ten hour shift (Spude 1990:109). As hired hands, however, they were considered part of the office staff, together with the bookkeeper, surveyor, and manager—distinct from the mining laborers. The assayer would take management’s side in union disputes, and were in a unique

position to climb the corporate ladder. They were also physically isolated from the miners, working above ground well away from the vibrations caused by mining blasts (Spude 1990:183).

Assayers employed by mining companies usually retained their rights to do supplemental private work in hopes of bolstering their income. Another way the assayer could profit was by taking part in highgrading. Highgrade ore, sometimes called “family ore,” usually consisted of small chunks of highly rich ore pocketed by miners while on the job. The assayer willing to play a part in this theft would quickly reduce the ore to bullion and ship it out of town, splitting the proceeds 50-50 with the miner (Spude 1990:167).

Assaying techniques and equipment were not used exclusively by those working in a private assaying office or mine. It was highly important for prospectors to be able to determine the worth of the ore they stumbled across, and it was not always in their best interest to hunt down a professional assayer for this information. Guides such as *The Explorer’s and Assayer’s Companion* (Phillips 1879) and *The Mine Examiner and Prospectors Companion* (Miller 1903) contained detailed descriptions of assaying techniques, as well as lists of supplies that a prospector would need to accurately and efficiently test ore samples.

While ore samples could be tested over a campfire, by the 1880s the “blowpipe” method was the most popular among prospectors. A small blowpipe, a candle, and some charcoal were all that was needed for this method, and its portability was an important feature for a highly mobile prospector (Young 1970:10). A basic blowpipe kit, with all of

the necessary chemical reagents and “packed in a fine wooded carrying case with a metal handle,” could be purchased for ten dollars (Denver Fire Clay Company 1905:261).

The Battersea Works scorifier found at Feature 131 initially led us to consider it as a site associated with assaying. As Spude’s (1990) research reveals, assayers were distinct from miners in important ways. They were more likely to be married with children, and were considered office staff rather than laborers. These differences could greatly influence the arrangement of their household and their consumer habits, both of which would be visible in the archaeological record. Further analysis of sites associated with assaying may reveal more about how this important activity played out in the private and public spheres of the Victorian-influenced mining camps of the American West.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

The unique challenge presented by the analysis of Feature 131 and Feature 177 required the use of literature from several fields. Since this investigation focuses on a household as a discrete unit, texts concerning household archaeology were examined. An explicit focus on gender and the material culture associated with it also required an examination of literature on engendered archaeology. Engendered archaeology is well-suited to household-based analyses, as gender is “a fundamental part of what organizes individuals into households and structures their relationships with the larger community and society around them” (Purser 1991:25). Indeed most—if not all—household archaeology deals explicitly with gender.

The bulk of this literature, however, equates gender with women and does not address men’s roles within the household. It was thus necessary to pull together a large number of sources from the area of masculinity studies. This literature gave insights into the importance of domestic concerns for Victorian men. Focusing on the influence of masculinity within the household created a more complex picture of the engendered lives in the mining West.

Household Archaeology

The focus on the household in archaeology (both prehistoric and historic) has led to some insightful research, yet the term “household” is most often not well-defined (Franklin 2004: xiii). The clearest definition I have found yet was offered by Nesta Anderson: “A household is a person or group of people who live together in one or more structures, who carry out daily activities necessary for the maintenance and social reproduction of the group within a specific space associated with the residence, and who

interact with other households” (Anderson 2004:111). Sometimes referred to as the smallest measurable socio-economic unit within a society, the practical use of the term is often equivalent to “individuals who lived in this particular structure.” This discrepancy need not invalidate the research done, though it is important to avoid treating the composition and dynamics of households as unproblematic (Allison 1999).

A particular danger for archaeologists studying households is the imposition of our culturally-charged views on the use of space (Franklin 2004). Many of these views have been carried over from the 19th century, when “domestic” and “public” became separate, gendered spheres (Hardesty 1994). An uncritical analysis of household material culture will conflate “domestic” with “female” and imply a male-dominated nuclear family structure. Even when the study focuses on 19th-century households, these assumptions ignore the great diversity in household composition and gender strategies present in any culture.

All of these complexities notwithstanding, household archaeology can contribute a great deal to our understanding of the everyday lives of people in the past. The household, as the basic social unit, can be used in comparative studies to flesh out larger social trends. For example, the material remains from a household represent the reproduction of and resistance to cultural norms, as well as the survival strategies of people interacting with their physical environment. Just as the material record may tell a very different story from the historical record, the activities that went on within a household, that is, behind closed doors, may give us insights into behaviors that did not conform to cultural expectations. Although it is important to remain conscious of the limitations of the archaeological record, investigations into household activities and their

spatial distribution seem the best suited to the unique methods of archaeology (Allison 1999).

Catherine Blee (1991), in her unpublished dissertation, investigated the effect of household composition on archaeological remains, although she did not refer to her study as household archaeology. Excavating a city dump in Skagway, Alaska, Blee used a statistical linear regression analysis in an attempt to reveal the types of households that had contributed to the dump. Using historical maps and other records, Blee compared her results to what was known about the neighborhood in the 1890s. Blee separated household assemblages into six types: Family Households, Male-Only Households, Saloons, Hotels and Restaurants, Brothels, and Military. The relative frequency of certain artifact types, such as alcohol bottles, gender-specific items, and undecorated ceramics, were then used to characterize these different household types. By comparing her findings with historical documentation about the location of saloons, and the compositions of households in the area, Blee then set to the task of explaining the differences in artifact frequencies.

Blee (1991:99) hypothesized that male-only households would show a high frequency of artifacts related to tobacco and alcohol consumption, firearms, tin cans, and condiment bottles. This characterization was then tested on ten different male-only assemblages, taken from mining communities, logging camps, railroad camps, and a hunter's cabin. Blee (1991:177) subsequently concluded that the profile of artifact frequencies for these assemblages (which were characterized by a very small number of artifacts) was more affected by the transient nature of the residents than by their gender. Although her method may only be picking up on transience of the residents, Blee argued

that this does not invalidate the usefulness of that method. The transient sector of society, after all, was predominantly male. Men who brought their families along to these settlements did so with the plan of a permanent relocation (e.g., Blee 1991:178).

One result of Blee's analysis that was not predicted by her model was the low frequency of alcohol bottles recovered from the all-male assemblages. A simple explanation for this could be that the majority of men did not do their drinking at home, but were encouraged to drink in the public setting of the saloon (Blee 1991:178). It is unexpected results like these that can lead to greater insights about the domestic behavior of men, even if these insights are revealed by the *absence* of artifacts instead of their presence.

Nesta Anderson's (2004) excavation of plantations in the Bahamas focused on the "houseyard" as the smallest spatial component of a household. The "houseyard" is made up of a house and its associated yard, where important daily activities took place (Anderson 2004:117). In this study of "nested" households, Anderson employs the concept of "activity areas": concentrations of artifacts that indicate the productive activities of the members of the household (Anderson 2004:110). Anderson explains how different household functions, such as preparing food or even socialization of children, could be reflected by concentrations of certain types of artifacts. Anderson suggests comparisons between activity areas at different houseyards in order to understand the contributions of each to a larger household (Anderson 2004:119).

Gibb and King (1991) make use of the concept of "activity areas" in their study of homelots in 17th Century Maryland. The purpose of their study is to compose an ethnography of colonial gender roles, and argue that this is best approached by studying

the activities performed at individual domestic sites (Gibb and King 1991: 109). The focus on productive activities, instead of specific artifacts, gave greater insight into the economic realities with the households. This led to an analysis of how the gendered division of labor was connected to economic and social variability between homelots (Gibb and King 1991:127). These three examples show how the data from excavations of households can be used to explore the influence of gender on material culture.

Engendered Archaeology

Engendered archaeology, sometimes referred to as feminist archaeology, is often closely tied to investigations of household activities. As a discipline explicitly concerned with investigating gender in the material record, this area of inquiry was inspired by the atheoretical nature of most archaeologist's treatment of gender in their analyses. As Conkey and Spector (1984:2) argued in their seminal work on engendered archaeology, archaeologists "are propagating culturally particular ideas about gender in their interpretations and reconstructions of the past."

Although Conkey and Spector mainly target prehistorians in their critique of presentist attitudes about gender, this issue is even more problematic in historical archaeology. When analyzing artifacts from the late 19th century, it is hard not to superimpose one's own cultural experiences onto the material record. Another complication for engendered historical archaeology is its particular goals. Most engendered historical studies are aimed at locating women in the archaeological record, in response to their notable absence in the historical record. While this is an important goal, in many cases the research was done without an explicit, engendered, theoretical

framework. Without such theoretical grounding, the research oversimplified and naturalized gender.

Donald Hardesty (1998) offers a compelling argument for how engendered archaeology can be successful in the American mining West—and outlines a methodology that can be used in conjunction with pertinent theoretical frameworks. The first element of his argument is the importance of a multidisciplinary approach. For example, artifacts must be analyzed in conjunction with the historical record, as well as oral histories. A preliminary model is constructed using these three types of evidence, which is then used to generate hypotheses about the specific region or settlement being studied. Testing of these hypotheses on the material record adds information to the model, and new hypotheses are then constructed (Hardesty 1998:284). To set up a theoretical framework for interpretation of these three lines of evidence, Hardesty argues that the archaeological record can be extremely informative about the gender strategies of individuals, as objects carry symbolic power. Gender identities are complex, and “involve the acquisition, maintenance, and control of material symbols communicating a distinct message” (Hardesty 1998:286).

In the newly-created mass-consumption culture of the mining West, consumer choices can tell us a great deal about gender identities. As historical archaeologists, our main data set can be seen as the remnants of these consumer choices. The concept of choices can be fleshed out by considering the fact that an important feature of Hardesty’s (1998) method is the use of gender *strategies*, which require framing gender as an activity instead of an innate personal characteristic. This concept, I would argue, more realistically describes the agency and variability of past people. While culture will always

be involved in maintaining and constraining gender-appropriate behavior, individuals make constant, varying choices about how to best express their position in the sex/gender system.

Hardesty (1998), although maintaining that an engendered archaeology will inform us about the lives of both men and women, spends the greater part of his paper discussing female gender strategies. Examples of archaeological analysis of women from different classes and ethnicities reveal the amount of variability in women's gender roles, and the many social realities that must be accounted for in a well-rounded gender study. While not explicitly concerned with male gender issues, Hardesty's (1998) method as described here could be easily used as a blueprint for a study of masculinity in the mining West.

Margaret Purser (1991) employs the same concept of gender strategies, referring to it as a "gender -is-as-gender does" approach in her study of two 19th century western towns (Purser 1991:7). Purser describes an archaeology fully informed by gender, and claims that, "it is not a matter of finding methods for equating women with specific artifact types or site features. It requires a shift away from such methods, which in spite of other intentions have often portrayed women as passive objects or victims of broader social events and have circumscribed gender within bounded contexts like household, domestic, and private" (Purser 1991:7). Instead Purser advocates an archaeology that considers gender as central to its interpretations of households and communities.

Purser encountered the complexity of attempting to define households archaeologically in the highly mobile communities of the mining West (Purser 1991:10). Historical sources suggested the significance of the role of women's "visiting" behavior

in maintaining continuity in such mobile communities (Purser 1991:11). This forced Purser to abandon traditional assumptions about the relationship of women to households (Purser 1991:10). Shifting the focus of engendered archaeology from women and households to gender and community may allow for richer understanding of the way gender structures social realities.

Spude (2005) uses a feminist and comparative approach to examine gender in the mining West. In her analysis of eight assemblages from the Pacific Northwest, she attempts to distinguish between brothels and saloons based on the frequencies of gender-specific artifacts. Spude argues that the determining factor distinguishing these assemblages is the gender of the individuals who selected the material culture, as the functions of brothels and saloons often overlapped (Spude 2005: 89). Since brothels were domestic residences as well as places of business, the women who lived there influenced the material culture in significant ways (Spude 2005: 91).

Spude contributes to engendered archaeology in this study by creating an artifact typology that will select for gender-related variables. She argues that “it does little good in trying to ascertain gender by using pre-established categories devised to solve other types of problems” (Spude 2005: 93). Spude’s artifact typology separates personal artifacts associated with women (such as jewelry and corset stays) from those associated with men (such as pocket watches and collar stays) (Spude 2005: 94). She also analyzed artifacts such as medicinal bottles in a gendered context. The large frequency of these bottles in brothel assemblages could be explained by 19th century women’s preference for these high-alcohol “medicines” over beer or liquor in order to maintain respectability. It

could also be explained by the various venereal diseases that the prostitutes may have been exposed to (Spude 2005:94).

Engendering Household Archaeology

In her examination of gender and household structure on the Australian goldfields, Susan Lawrence (1999) argues for the importance of a feminist approach to household archaeology. She makes the observation that both gender and households are basic structuring agents of all societies yet there has been little work done investigating the effects of gender on the material remains of the household. Lawrence is encouraged by recent studies moving in this direction, as both household studies and engendered archaeology have much to contribute to one another (Lawrence 1999:121).

Since engendered archaeology must first increase the visibility of women in the archaeological record, it seems that a focus on household archaeology would be beneficial. However, the direct association of women with the domestic sphere is something that should be approached critically. Lawrence (1999:122) argues that idealized notions of gender roles will continue to be reified by household archaeologists, “unless there is an accompanying awareness of women’s activities outside the domestic environment and of men’s activities within it.” Lawrence notes Blee’s (1991) use of artifact frequencies to test for gender composition in households, but argues that these types of “signature studies” need to go further in their analyses. Lawrence (1999:123) argues that, “because signature studies do not move beyond the observable differences in archaeological assemblages, they do not explore the social processes surrounding the assemblages.” Lawrence therefore favors an interpretive approach that takes these patterns in artifact assemblages as mere starting points, recommending that it is essential

to move beyond the identification of gender toward investigations that examine the ways that gender identities are formed (Lawrence 1999:123).

Lawrence's investigation used the archaeological remains of four households on the Morabool diggings in Australia, a subsistence mining community inhabited primarily in the 1850s and 1860s. Very few gender-specific items were recovered from these households, but those associated with females were used to identify multi-gendered households. The assemblages from these households were compared to those that did not contain evidence of women. For example, a greater number and variety of home furnishings were found in conjunction with the female-specific artifacts, indicating the importance of domesticity to the Australian women at this time (Lawrence 1999:125,138).

Lawrence goes beyond simply comparing artifact assemblages, however, and uses the material record as a starting point for a broader social interpretation. While interpretation must be constrained by the data, she argues, it "arises out of the details of the data, and then is used to inform broader perspectives" (Lawrence 1999:123). Rejecting a strict logical positivism, Lawrence calls for interpretive methods better suited to study gender as a process, rather than a series of traits (Lawrence 1999:123). Lawrence's interpretive approach begins with finding patterns (either in assemblages or groups of artifacts) and using these patterns to "examine and make visible gender in social structures" (Lawrence 1999:123). She argues that analyses of this type can still be meaningful, even when the archaeological data are severely limited. By focusing on gender as a structuring principle of households, Lawrence uncovers complex subsistence strategies and kin networks made possible by the existence of women.

The studies cited above each contribute an important element to a comprehensive engendered investigation of a household, which is the goal of my research at Feature 131. Blee (1991) shows the knowledge that can be gained by using frequency of artifact types to reflect the gender of those within the household. Hardesty (1998) offers the framework for interpreting the material record as a physical manifestation of the gender strategies employed by individuals. Purser (1991) employs the framework of gender strategies to challenge traditional notions of the connection between gender and the domestic sphere. Lawrence (1999) adds her complementary view, while stressing that gender is not static, but is constantly in a process of formation. This formation process can be best understood by using a more interpretive approach, placing the archaeological data in a wider social context which leads to investigations of the influence of gender on household activities and socioeconomic strategies.

In order to provide some of the context for life at Coloma, I will now address some of the cultural trends that may have influenced gender strategies at the time, and how these strategies may have played out within the household. A great deal of literature has been written on the Victorian's focus on domestic concerns, and their correlation of the home with the "private" and the feminine. This concept, contrasted with the "public" and masculine, constituted the ideology of "separate spheres." Just how much currency this concept held in everyday households is up for debate, but it is important to address as one of the possible influences on gender strategies in the 19th century.

Separate Spheres

This concept of “separate spheres” grew out of the Cult of Domesticity, the tenets of which were laid out in Catharine Beecher’s *The Treatise on Domestic Economy* in 1841 (e.g., Rotman 2009:19). Domesticity required that a literal physical separation exist between women’s and men’s activities, with women’s place, or sphere, being at home and private and men’s at the workplace and in the public sphere.

Domesticity was also referred to as “true womanhood,” and celebrated women’s domesticity, submissiveness and moral purity (Rotman 2009:20). Victorians believed in a biological basis for the gendered division of labor, which has been used to explain the popularity of this ideology. Industrialization was also a contributing factor, as profitable activities moved out of the home and into factories and office buildings. It is important to note the obvious point that gendered division of labor existed long before the industrial revolution. Even so, the terms of the Victorian divisions were more extreme and socially charged, making for a challenging context influencing archaeological interpretations of materials from this era.

This idealized vision of domesticity, however, was only truly accessible to some. Women from the lower classes, for example, could not afford to stay at home and revel in domesticity; a large number of these women still worked outside the home and therefore took part in the more masculine public sphere. Clyde Griffen (1990:202) points out that working-class women at this time were in an untenable position: these families required more than one wage-earner, demanding that women combine a job with full-time parenting and housekeeping responsibilities. The added pressure to increase consumption stretched their resources even further.

The separation of spheres was also not feasible in areas where women were scarce, such as in the American mining West. As with any culturally prescribed behavior, many individuals (both men and women) did not always conform to Victorian ideals of domesticity. It is important, then, not to uncritically impose these views onto our interpretations of material culture from the period. Nancy Cott (1990:206) sees the tendency to equate the ideological construct of separate spheres with actual physical sites as a reification drawn from early women's history. She points out the readily available pictorial evidence of women's presence outdoors, while noting that men continued to have legal and patriarchal power in the home. The language of "spheres" she argues, "had as much to do with the ruling fiction of differentiation between the sexes as it did with physical sites—perhaps more"(Cott 1990:207). Archaeologists in particular must resist the temptation to map ideology directly onto geography.

Amanda Vickery (1993) questions the usefulness of the paradigm of "separate spheres" in Women's History, arguing that women's individual experiences have been molded to fit historian's paradigms. When particular women or groups have been studied, she argues, "Victorian women emerge as no less spirited, capable, and, most importantly, diverse a crew as in any other century" (Vickery 1993:390). This diversity speaks to the availability of differing gender strategies at the time.

Vickery notes that Victorian ideals of feminine domesticity were just that—ideals. She argues the crucial point, one that historical archaeologists are in a powerful position to corroborate, that "women, like men, were eminently capable of professing one thing and performing quite another" (Vickery 1993:391). Vickery does not dismiss the importance of gendered division of labor, considering it to be a nearly universal reality.

She does contest the idea that the Victorians had taken this division significantly further. In fact, Vickery argues that the focus within Victorian literature on the woman's "proper" sphere may actually be evidence of women's increased involvement in the public arena. Thus, we could read prescriptive literature of the time as part of a conservative backlash, attempting to reestablish part of the patriarchal order (Vickery 1993:400).

A critical reading of history is crucial for any study of culture, and remaining skeptical about the influence of ideologies pertaining to gender, such as "separate spheres," may help historical archaeologists to avoid biased interpretations of the material record. Archaeologists are privileged in comparison to historians, as we are not constrained by documentary evidence. The archaeological record offers a material reflection of historical realities, one that contains no motive or editing (although archaeologists' interpretations of the material record are riddled with bias). Through an engendered household archaeology it may be possible to uncover nuances of the domestic, "private" lives of men.

Masculinity

Just as an engendered approach to archaeology requires an explicit theory of gender, an archaeological investigation of predominantly male communities (such as mining camps) should be explicit about the characteristics of masculinity. In his research on the anthropology of masculinity, Matthew C. Gutmann (1997:385) points out that, in anthropology overall, "gender studies are still often equated with women's studies." The importance of men as gendered subjects is often overlooked, even as men are the explicit subject of the majority of anthropological investigations. Gutmann describes four distinct

ways that the term masculinity has been used by anthropologists, noting that many unknowingly employ more than one definition simultaneously:

The first concept of masculinity holds that it is, by definition, anything that men think and do. The second is that masculinity is anything men think and do to be men. The third is that some men are inherently or by ascription considered “more manly” than other men. The final manner of approaching masculinity emphasizes the general and central importance of male-female relations, so that masculinity is considered anything that women are not (Gutmann 1997:386).

Moreover, it is also unclear how much of an anthropologist’s own views have affected the characterizations of other culture’s expressions of masculinity, femininity, and homosexuality (e.g., Gutmann 1997:387). Gutmann also points out that the researchers who do study men as gendered subjects tend to ignore the contributions of feminists to our understanding of gender and sexuality. He argues that research on masculinity requires the input of women on their views about and experiences with men. This is because masculinities derive their meaning only in relation to women (Gutmann 1997:400).

Historian John Tosh (1994) argues that masculinity studies are necessary to understand gender systems as a whole, noting that “in the historical record it is as though masculinity is everywhere and nowhere” (Tosh 1994:180). Tosh considers historians of masculinity to be in a privileged position to demonstrate the universal influence of gender in all aspects of life, noting that women’s history is often dismissed as dealing with small-scale activities (family, philanthropy) that do not seem to have larger cultural significance (Tosh 1994:179-180). He focuses his study on men in Victorian Britain, but much of this research is applicable to American men at the time, presuming the widespread popularity of Victorian ideals throughout the 19th century.

Tosh's definition of masculinity is not a particular set of cultural attributes, but the demonstration of a social status (Tosh 1994: 184). He argues that masculinity has a significantly public basis. Citing anthropological studies, he notes the seemingly universal cultural process of "testing" masculinity among male peers from childhood and beyond. Tosh describes the three public arenas in which Victorian masculinity was demonstrated: home, work and all-male associations (Tosh 1994:184).

Household concerns, Tosh argues, were central for proving masculinity, as the household was believed to be "a microcosm of the political order" (Tosh 1994:185). The maintenance of a comfortable household reflected on a man's ability to financially provide for his family (Tosh 1994:185). While men's involvement in the everyday tasks needed to maintain such a household may have varied, the man's role as "master in his own home" was a central attribute of Victorian masculinity (Tosh 1994:185). Tosh also criticizes the notion of "separate spheres," as "men's privileged ability to pass freely between the public and the private was integral to the social order" (Tosh 1994: 188).

While the three arenas of home, work, and male association maintain constant influence in masculinity, "the precise character of masculine formation at any time is largely determined by the balance struck *between* these three components" (Tosh 1994:187). It is significant that, in this characterization of masculinity, domestic concerns are considered to be a central element of a linked system, characterized by "contradiction and instability" (Tosh 1994: 188). Thus, it is the particular weight given to each concern (home, work, and association) that characterizes masculinity at a given time.

Throughout the Victorian period, strain was evident between these three elements of masculinity. Within the middle class, the ideology of domesticity clashed with the

importance of public activities in men's lives. This was most evident in the earlier part of the 19th century, before middle-class morality took its aim at alcohol consumption (Tosh 1994: 188). For Tosh, however, the most extreme tension was between work and home. Whereas many men had defined themselves by their occupation, a growing number began to feel alienated by their work, and sought refuge within their "castle" (Tosh 1994: 188).

By the 1880s, Tosh argues, the importance of home and the homosocial world were almost equal for upper and middle class men. These men were more likely to join clubs, read adventure novels, and be involved in rough physical activities. For the working class, home held less appeal. Supplemental income might be provided by his wife taking work inside the home, and thus it may have been less of a refuge for these men. Whereas a growing minority of well-paid skilled workers spent a good deal of their leisure-time at home, those men who could not afford domestic luxuries would spend their evening hours in a drinking establishment (Tosh 1994: 189).

History of American Masculinity

Gender is best understood not as a collection of traits, but as a historical process. Gail Bederman makes this point as she defines masculinity as "the cultural process whereby concrete individuals are constituted as members of a preexisting social category-as men" (1995:7). Thus it is important to describe some of the changes that masculinity underwent throughout the 19th century in order to provide a richer context for examining the lives of men in the mining West.

Robert L. Griswold (1990) uses court transcripts of divorce hearings in the 19th century to illustrate the changing expectations on men as husbands throughout this

period. The cult of domesticity with its exaltation of the virtues of women and mothers, as well as the various reform movements, demanded that men “forfeit traditional male prerogatives in exchange for closer emotional and psychological ties with his wife and children” (Griswold 1990:97). The focus on the domestic sphere as the center of moral and cultural growth demanded that men become good companions for their wives and role models for their children by exhibiting temperance, kindness and self-control.

Margaret Marsh (1990) describes the “masculine domesticity” of this period in her study on suburban men. This notion of masculinity urged men to help out more with domestic duties, to spend more quality time with their children, and put priority on building their relationship with their wife, rather than spending evenings out with other men (Marsh 1990:112). Marsh points out that this ideology required that men have enough job security to be able to devote extra time and energy to their families, thus making this version of masculine domesticity a middle-class endeavor.

Gail Bederman (1995) describes the class issues that shaped this conception of masculinity. The middle class, Bederman argues, between 1820 and 1860, rapidly expanded and sought to differentiate itself from the working class “by stressing its gentility and respectability”(Bederman 1995:11). The middle-class notion of true manhood focused on the manly strength of self-control, which was central to maintaining financial stability in the market economy. Credit raters could award or refuse credit based on men’s “honesty, probity and family life” (Bederman 1995:12).

This notion of “manliness,” however, became increasingly unprofitable during the later part of the 19th century, and a masculinity “crisis” transformed middle class ideals. The economic landscape changed rapidly, and the number of self-employed middle-class

men dropped from 67 percent to 37 percent between 1870 and 1910 (Bederman 1995:12). A number of economic depressions took place between 1873 and 1896, leaving men pessimistic about their ability to achieve independent wealth as self-made men. At the same time, the growing consumer culture encouraged men to seek pleasure through goods, and identity through leisure activities, which clashed with the ideals of frugality and work ethic (Bederman 1995:13).

Mark A. Swiencicki (1998) uses the 1890 U.S. Census of Manufacturers, magazine advertisements, and other historical sources to show the importance of men as consumers in the late 19th century. Although historians tend to focus on the consumer choices of women in this period, Swiencicki (1998:774) observes that men may have spent nearly twice as much as women. Men spent a great deal of money on services and leisure-related items outside of the home. They were also, however, purchasing a great deal of personal items, such as expensive furs, skin beautifiers, and hair tonics (Swiencicki 1998:781).

Men experienced greater competition from women in the workforce, as the number of clerical jobs held by women rose from 3 percent to 35 percent between 1870 and 1910 (Hoffert 2003: 284). The women's suffrage movement gained momentum in 1890, and the success of reform movements heralding women's moral superiority led to concerns about feminization of the American culture (Hoffert 2003:285). Some men responded to these pressures by attempting to regain control of the domestic sphere through a more active role in childrearing (Bederman 1995:17).

While middle-class men were distinguishing themselves through a "respectable manliness," working-class men formulated a masculinity that valued physical strength,

sexuality, and a “rough” demeanor (Bederman 1995:17). During the period of the masculinity crisis, as Victorian ideals were being abandoned, many middle-class men embraced this more aggressive, competitive and impulsive masculinity (Hoffert 2003:286). This new masculinity was tested by some in the arena of sports: boxing, bodybuilding, and other physical endeavors. For some, however, the rugged, “frontier” character of the West was the ultimate arena in which to prove ones virility.

Masculinity and the West

Gail Bederman (1995:174) describes how Western adventure novels portrayed the “fictional Western frontier, where boys demonstrated their heroic masculinity by killing fierce animals and battling wild Indians.” These types of novels, with their description of a dominating and violent masculinity, were part of the American culture that inspired men to move into the West and take their chances in mining towns. Chester Pray, Coloma’s assayer, was lured west partially by dime-novels, as well as the spectacle of Buffalo Bill’s Wild West show (Clapp 2007:17).

The realities of the social world of the mining West, as it has been noted, were much different than these romanticized stories and exhibitions. Susan Lee Johnson (2000) describes men’s daily lives in a California gold mining camp, and shows the flexibility of gender strategies in the face of subsistence needs. With a very large male to female ratio, men in mining camps were required to perform tasks that would have been considered (by some) to be appropriate for women. The detailed picture that emerged of the ways in which these men divided up their domestic tasks may help to interpret archaeological evidence from other Western mining sites.

For example, Johnson observes that men in the Southern Mines east of Stockton, California would band together and organize domestic activities. The most common type of household in the Southern mines consisted of two to five men who would work together in the placer mines and keep a common fund for the purchase of household necessities (Johnson 2000:106). Other variations existed, such as groups of smaller households banding together to work on larger projects, or households where the money was not kept in a common fund, yet the men still divided domestic chores. Some men ended up alone, but the great majority of men spent most of their time as part of a single-gendered household (Johnson 2000:107).

The availability of food in an area greatly influenced the organization of the household in Stockton, California's Southern Mines. Settlements in close proximity to a boardinghouse may have had more men eating outside of the home, but where these services were unavailable, the tasks of procuring and cooking food had to be well-organized by the miners. Men would most frequently take turns cooking, usually being assigned to alternating weeks. These weeks would be filled with preparing large amounts of staple foods, as well as cooking three meals a day. Journal entries describe the men's kitchen duties as baking bread, boiling meat, frying doughnuts, and making pies and puddings (Johnson 2000:110).

The ability to perform domestic tasks well was valued by miners who would be sharing these duties. Men who were particularly skilled at cooking might take over the task entirely. Men wrote to their wives rejoicing over their newfound culinary abilities, and other men were valued for their ability to build furniture. Many men associated the French with these domestic abilities, particularly their panache for keeping gardens,

making delicious food, and maintaining clean cabins (Johnson 2000:118). Other domestic tasks valued and undertaken by these men were the washing and mending of clothes. Most would do their laundry in the river on Saturdays or Sundays, while some would just jump in and wash themselves and their clothing simultaneously (Johnson 2000:122). Sewing and mending clothes were often done socially, as men would gather at one cabin and talk while sewing. Men also took to the task of caretaking the sick among them (Johnson 2000:123).

While Johnson describes certain domestic comforts provided by all-male communities, Elliott West (1979) focuses on the more public aspect of homosocial activities in his descriptions of saloons. Masculinity in the mining West, using Tosh's (1994) definition, was defined by the balance struck between the home, work and male association. Working-class miners may have felt less defined by their labor, and those who were married may have sought refuge at home with their families. Single men, however, would often spend their extra hours in the company of other men at a saloon. Inside the saloon these men would display a "rough" masculinity, the décor a celebration of sports, naked women, and military prowess described by West as "Victorian macho" (West 1979: 47).

Victorian concepts of manliness were very strongly tied to military and nationalist concerns. This became most evident in 1898, as increased tensions led to the Spanish-American War and the Philippine Insurrection. Politicians who did not support going to war were criticized as "lacking manly character" (Hoganson 1998: 10). War was promoted as a character-building enterprise for American men, one that would develop "manly" characteristics such as courage and physical strength (Hoganson 1998: 201).

Support for the war was strong in Montana, as the Montana National Guard was the first in the nation to volunteer to go to the front lines (Hines 2002).

As Tosh (1994) characterized masculinity, it exhibited a constant struggle between home, male association, and work. The home and the saloon have been discussed above as playing important roles in the performance of masculinity in the West. But what was the importance of work for residents of a mining town? Whereas in the early part of the 19th century men may have defined themselves by their profession, the changes in industry throughout the century led to an increased alienation between the craftsman and their product (Baxter 2002: 22). Class status then superseded job title for working-class men. The center for the reproduction of class values was the home, and these homes were (sometimes intentionally) located a significant distance from the workplace (Baxter 2002: 23). Although 19th century masculinity was always dependent on a man's ability to financially support himself or his family, it seems that for miners and other members of the working class work may have had less significance than it did for the middle and upper classes.

Coloma hit its boom in the late 1890s, right in the middle of the "masculinity crisis." It is thus a perfect laboratory for investigating the effect of this "crisis" on men's gender strategies. Investigation of a household assemblage may provide information about how these strategies played out in the domestic sphere. In the next chapter I will describe the methods used to undertake an archaeological investigation of this type.

Chapter 4: Research Methods

Historical and Background Research

The bulk of the historical research work needed for this project had been completed, by Mark Timmons. Timmons went through all of the newspaper archives and compiled all references to Coloma into one document (Timmons 2009). This document represents the most detailed account of Coloma's history in existence, and provided useful information regarding the dates of occupation, mine workings, and accounts of interesting people and events around Coloma.

The other main source of information used here is the diary of Hilma Hanson, the former Coloma schoolteacher (Kimbal 1933; see also Timmons 2009). Her "Journal of Remembrances" describes interesting characters in Coloma and details her experiences for the short time that she lived there. Her journal gives us a more personal look at the town, and is very valuable for giving the names of several people along with their background and living situation.

One of those people mentioned by Hilma Hanson was Chester Pray, who worked as an assayer in the mining office. A simple Google search for the name "Chester Pray" brought up a book title: "Who Killed Chester Pray?" by Nicholas Clapp (2007). Correspondence with the author revealed that the Chester Pray he had written about was the same as the one mentioned by Hilma Hanson. Chester had continued on in his assaying career, making his way to Death Valley and dying under mysterious circumstances. This book has been helpful in giving a detailed picture of one of Coloma's

residents, showing his motivations for moving out West and detailing what happened after he had left Coloma.

In addition to examining the history of Coloma, it was also necessary to research the literature related to the mining West, and, given the objectives summarized in the Literature Review (Chapter #3), it was also important to conduct a search of studies relevant to household archaeology and engendered archaeology in the American Mining West.

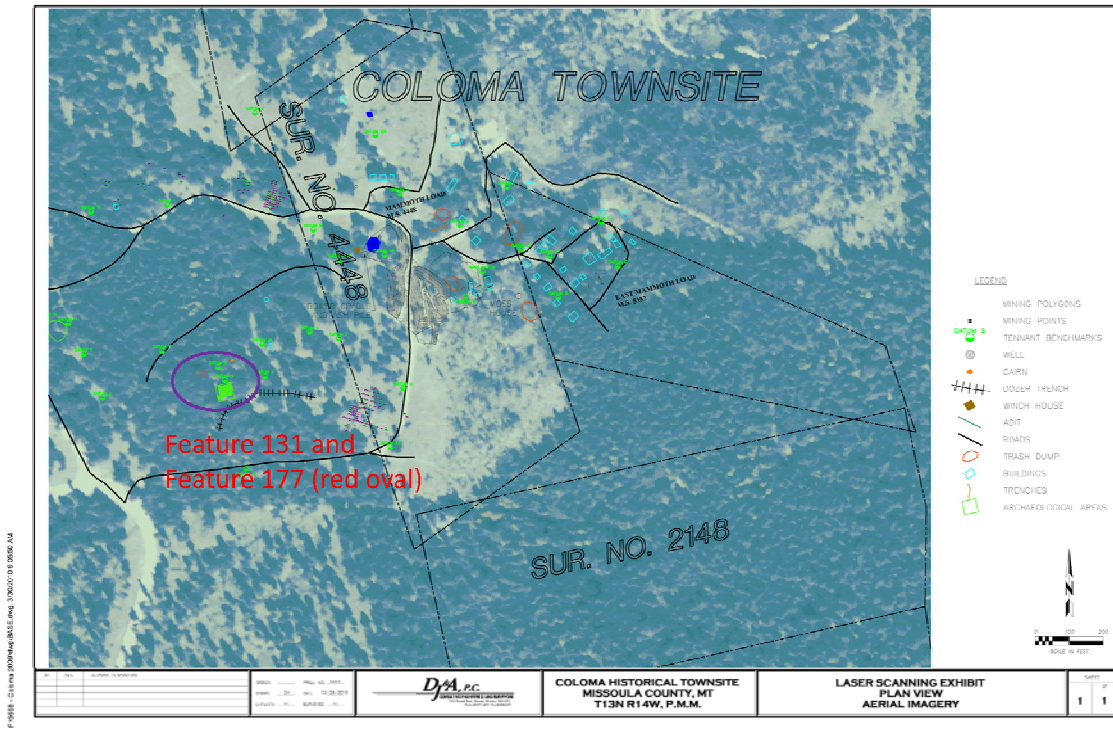


Figure 4.1 Map of Coloma with Features 131 and 177 encircled by the oval in the western portion of the site.

Field Methods: Field Season 2007

As I was not present for the 2007 field season at Feature 131, my information about the activities from that summer has been taken from field notebooks. The work started with the identification of the structure footprint and corresponding dripline. A ten meter by eleven meter grid was laid out to surround the entire dripline, and one meter by one meter units were delineated. A smaller three meter by three meter grid was laid out surrounding the hearth, but no excavation was done in this area.

A great deal of time was spent clearing the main grid of small trees and thick vines. Careful work was done so as not to disturb the soil underneath the vegetation. An interesting thing noted during this process was the presence of a perfectly straight line of small trees through the middle of the feature, which may indicate the presence of a sill log or a wall dividing the structure (Figure 4.2).



Figure 4.2. Feature 131 with row of saplings that may indicate sill logs. Courtesy, Jennifer Ogborne.

All of the units within the border of the sill logs were surface cleaned- that is, the duff was removed and sifted. This method was continued for the three rows of units

containing what is believed to have been a lean-to shed. The intention was to leave artifacts intact, but the artifacts that were accidentally collected were bagged and marked as coming from Stratum I of their respective units. Once cleaned, all of these units were photographed and mapped separately. Artifacts—both collected and left in situ—were noted on the unit forms. Munsell numbers were assigned to the “loam/duff” left on the surface of these units.

Units were excavated by natural strata as indicated by changes in soil color and character. Also noted in the stratigraphic information was the presence of a wood lens, or in some cases just a wood stain, which indicates the remnants of the wood floor of the structure. Strata would be labeled “Stratum I” and “Stratum I-below wood lens” if the soil seemed to be of consistent type and color both above and below the lens. Excavation of Stratum I- the “loam” layer- was recorded from “Stratum I-surface” to “Stratum I-base,” where the base of Stratum I could be considered the same as the surface of Stratum II. Context numbers were assigned to each stratum of each unit. These numbers were noted on all forms and artifact bags to aid organization in the lab and database.

Excavation was started on seven units. Units 106, 115 and 128 were excavated in a line near the possible doorway, adjacent to a break in the sill logs. Only stratum I was removed from these three units before the end of the 2007 field season. Both Units 194 and 195 were excavated into part of the way into Stratum III. Unit 194, however, was very uneven and excavated much deeper in one corner. In this corner the crew unearthed a piece of worked chert, so this level probably represents a prehistoric occupation level. Unit 190 was excavated through Stratum I. Unit 179 was excavated well into Stratum III, but still not considered sterile due to the large amount of charcoal still being found.

At the end of the field season all of the opened units were covered with plastic and backfilled. A 2007 U.S. quarter was placed in each unit, under the plastic, to mark the end of the excavations. The lines for the grid were taken down, but the metal pins were left, hammered even with the top of the soil. All artifact bags were taken to the lab and inventoried.

Field Methods: Field Season 2008

Feature 131

In the summer of 2008, the pins outlining the grid for Feature 131 were located, and the grid was restrung. Some error was found in the pin placement that was built into the grid from the 2007 season, and it was decided to keep this error in order to keep the units consistent with the past field season. Although surface artifacts had drifted within the feature—probably due to snow, as the feature is located on a fairly steep hill—very little disturbance of the units was found.

All units previously photographed (those within the sill logs, plus the three rows containing the possible shed) were re-photographed and notes were made on the unit forms describing the way in which artifacts had moved from the last season. No distinct context numbers had been assigned for surface artifacts in the previous season, and these were all lumped with Stratum I. It was decided to create a “Stratum I-surface” designation with a separate context number. In this way, all of the surface artifacts could be collected without affecting the results for Stratum I. All of the photographed units were surface collected in this manner, and the artifacts were placed in labeled paper bags for transport back to the lab.

Excavation was performed using hand trowels, uncovering soil evenly across the units, and recording natural soil changes as separate Strata. Larger artifacts, as well as soil stains, were pedestalled and photographed. Soil was placed into buckets and sifted through a 1/8 inch wire screen. Artifacts recovered were placed in paper bags; smaller and more delicate artifacts were transported in sealed plastic containers within the bags. Along with cultural materials, a certain amount of rock samples were saved from each context for comparison across the feature, and to help determine which types of rocks may have been transported to the feature, and were not naturally occurring. All of the previously excavated units were re-opened for this field season in order to take them down to a sterile level. Unit 194, where the prehistoric material had been found, was taken down into Stratum IV, deeper than any of the other units, in order to bring the rest of the unit even with the over-excavated corner, and to discern if there were other prehistoric artifacts present. Unit 195, adjacent to Unit 194, was taken down to this same level, looking for additional prehistoric material that may have been present.

Units 106, 115, 128, 179 and 190 were all taken down to Stratum III, considered sterile, and mapped and photographed. Depth levels were taken and profiles were drawn. At first it was difficult to decide whether the units were truly sterile, due to the large amount of charcoal uncovered. This layer, however, was found to be consistent over the entire hillside, as it turned up in Feature 131, Feature 177, and Feature 172 at the bottom of the hill. The most likely explanation for this charcoal layer, as no artifacts have been found beneath it, is that it was caused by a wildfire. It was then decided, for the sake of efficiency, that the charcoal lens could be considered an indicator for the base of the

historic occupation layer and use of the area. In the additional units, digging stopped once that lens was reached.

Three other units were opened and excavated. Unit 203 was placed on the possible snow porch in order to determine whether there were any structural remnants of such an architectural feature. Unit 159 was opened because it was in the center of the feature, in an area where no other excavation had been opened. Unit 197 was opened to explore the possible shed area. This unit was full of cloth fragments and was very time-consuming to excavate. Small brushes were used, and the cloth was pedestalled as much as possible. Unfortunately, this unit could not be completed due to time constraints.

At the end of fieldwork, all of the strings demarcating the excavation grid were again taken down with the pins left in place so that the unfinished unit (Unit 197) could be located for further work. Plastic was put over this unit, and all open units were backfilled. All artifact bags were transported to the lab. Following the same format as the 2007 field season, a 2008 U.S. quarter was placed in each unit to mark the end of our excavations.

Feature 177

Feature 177 was also investigated and gridded during the 2008 field season. Feature 177 is an artifact scatter located about 15 meters southwest of Feature 131, and most likely represents the dump associated with the feature. The boundaries of the scatter were defined first by placing a pin at a central point. Lines were then run to the north, south east and west of this pin. Lines were strung connecting the perimeter pins, creating a polygon roughly 14.5 meters by 6 meters.

Next, a two-meter by two-meter recording frame was constructed. This was laid over the ground in three places, and all of the surface artifacts were mapped and collected. A one meter by one meter drawing grid was used for four other contexts, and the artifacts were again mapped and collected. One of these units was chosen for excavation, as the scatter seemed deepest in this area. The unit was excavated down to a sterile layer containing only charcoal, the same layer observed in Feature 131. Artifacts remaining within the border of the feature were piece-plotted. They were assigned numbers which corresponded to numbers on a feature map, and then collected.

Laboratory Methods

Once all of the artifact bags were in the lab, they were checked in on a log sheet indicating the date that they were received. Artifacts were bagged by context numbers in the field, and this procedure was kept consistent in the lab as well. Artifacts were cleaned and sorted by material. All of these smaller bags were placed in a clean plastic “mother bag” organized by context number and excavation date. A single context could have several bags of this sort if the same context was excavated over several days.

Some consistency issues were recognized in the lab during the organization process. In the 2007 field season, strata had been split into different designations such as “Stratum II” or “Stratum II below wood lens,” yet distinct context numbers had not been assigned to differentiate between them. This required new context numbers to be assigned to these strata, which were indicated on the site forms as well as the artifact bags themselves. This allowed for a more accurate analysis of data once the information had been entered into the database.

Another confusion was recognized by comparing site forms in the lab, which was the different ways that field workers would label strata. Whereas in the 2008 field season the covering of loamy duff was considered to be Stratum I, some of the work done in 2007 considered this layer to be not part of the unit itself, and was removed during the “photo cleaning” stage of excavation. Since this layer has now been determined to have been a contaminated layer, these inconsistencies have not affected the overall analysis of the feature.

Artifacts were assigned artifact numbers, beginning with the Smithsonian Trinomial 24MO172, and the prefix number 2 indicating Feature 131. Nearly every artifact was given its own number—the only exceptions being very small unidentifiable metal or glass fragments. Where possible, artifacts were physically labeled. Clear nail polish was applied to the artifact, and then ink was applied over this layer with the artifact number, and another layer of nail polish on top of the number to preserve it.

In the cases where the artifact could not be physically labeled they were placed in their own separate bag with a tag that indicated the site number, feature number, context number, artifact number, material and date of excavation. The artifacts were then sorted into larger bags based on material (e.g. wood, metal and glass). These bags would contain a tag as well. All of the materials bags for each context were then placed in a much larger bag, which also had its own “contents” tag listing all of the artifacts contained in it. Once numbered, the artifacts were weighed and measured. All of the pertinent information about the artifacts needed for the database was used to make blank artifact forms for each material type: ceramics, faunal, glass, metal, and miscellaneous. These forms were filled

out as the artifacts were analyzed. These forms were then used to enter the artifact information into an Access database.

Once all artifacts were entered, any mendable artifacts were separated from their bags and mended using Duco rubber cement. A slip of paper was placed into each bag indicating which artifact had been removed from it for mending. These mended artifacts were placed together in an archival box labeled “mended artifacts.” All other bags were put in order by context number into archival-quality boxes, and all boxes were delivered to the Department of Anthropology’s curation facility in the basement of the Social Science building.

Analytical Methods

Running queries with the completed Access database allowed for comparison of numbers of artifact types, as well as identifying areas of artifact concentrations. Analysis of dateable artifacts has provided a fairly small window of occupation for the feature. The types and concentration of artifacts can help us identify the activities of people living at Feature 131, as well as an idea of the layout of the structure.

Artifacts were divided into seven categories: clothing, food, sewing, armaments, leisure, personal and assaying. These artifact categories were analyzed with respect to activities as well as gender. Individual artifacts were put within a gendered framework in an attempt to determine the function of the feature, as well as the gender of its inhabitants. They were also used as a springboard into an examination of masculinity in the 19th century, and more specifically how male gender strategies were played out in the domestic sphere. . Artifacts were then reorganized into categories consistent with Spude’s (2006) comparative method. Frequencies of these artifact categories were compared with

predictive assemblages generated by Spude in order to determine similarities and differences between the material culture of Feature 131 and that of various household types.

Chapter 5: Results

Feature 131: Structural Elements

Feature 131 consists of the footprint of a structure (see Figure 4.1), along with stone hearth that appears to have been adjacent to the outside of the southwest corner of that structure (Figure 5.1). Very little wood remains, and the structure itself was likely disassembled to provide wood either for mining operations or for construction of another building. It is difficult to know just how long ago the building was torn down. The dimensions of the structure (about 7.5m by 6.5m or 24.6ft by 21.3ft) were determined by measuring the remnants of the decaying sill logs that once framed it.



Figure 5.1 Stone hearth outside southwest corner of Feature 131; photo faces west. Courtesy, Jennifer Ogborne.

The structure was rectangular, with what appears to have been a lean-to type shed attached to the east wall, measuring about 2.5m by 3m (8.2ft by 9.8ft). A leveled-off area just outside the sill logs to the north, along with a large amount of roofing shingles recovered, point to the presence of a snow porch. A break in the sill logs on the south side indicates the presence of a doorway, and a number of tacks were recovered in a line

adjacent to this break and parallel to the sill logs. These tacks may have secured tar paper, carpeting, or some other floor covering.

The wood floor was present in some excavation units as merely a lens or soil discoloration, and in others as a distinguishable layer of decaying wood . Several artifacts were recovered underneath this wood lens, pointing to the possibility that small objects made their way through the spaces between planks. A large number of nails were recovered from within the feature, which may have been left when the building was disassembled. While the majority (n=360) of the nails were wire nails, about 5 per cent (n=20) of the nails recovered were square nails.

It is difficult to determine the type of construction used on the former building. Although logs (some held together by wire) seem to have provided the foundation for the building, the large amount of nails points to the use of wooden planks, either for entire upper part of the structure, or for siding. About 5 per cent (n=21) of the nails recovered were bent at 90 degree angles, which implies hammering a nail through planks and then hammering it flat on the other side to secure it. Only a small amount of window glass was found. A large door hinge still attached to a chunk of wood was excavated from the northeast corner of the feature, in the unit adjacent to the possible shed. A large door key was found in Unit 194, the unit adjacent to the snow porch area, which may have been another doorway.

Stratum I consists of a loamy duff layer- this must now be considered a contamination layer, as objects were observed to have migrated throughout Stratum I between the first and second field seasons. However, in the 2007 field season the designation “Stratum I Base” and “Stratum I Base Below Wood Lens” were used to

describe thin clay-like layer under the duff containing the remnants of the wood floor. Depending on the decomposition level of the wood floor, this Stratum is in some cases indistinguishable from Stratum II. Continuity of artifacts in these Strata further supports the idea that there is no meaningful difference between them.

For this analysis, I will treat Stratum I Base as the equivalent of Stratum II, noting where necessary the position of artifacts in relation to the wood lens. Stratum III was a sterile layer in three of the nine units excavated. There does not seem to be any real historical difference between Strata II and III, and both field observations and lab analysis support the idea that Stratum III represents the bottom of Stratum II with no meaningful distinction. The soil change observed in the field may have been caused by differential water absorption along the hillside. Overall, we are looking at a very small time window for the occupation of the structure (Figure 5.2), so it is not surprising to find very little stratigraphic differentiation.

Figure 5.2 Estimated time range for Feature 131 projected onto dateable artifacts using what is already known about the history of Coloma as reference.

Feature 131 Strat I Surface

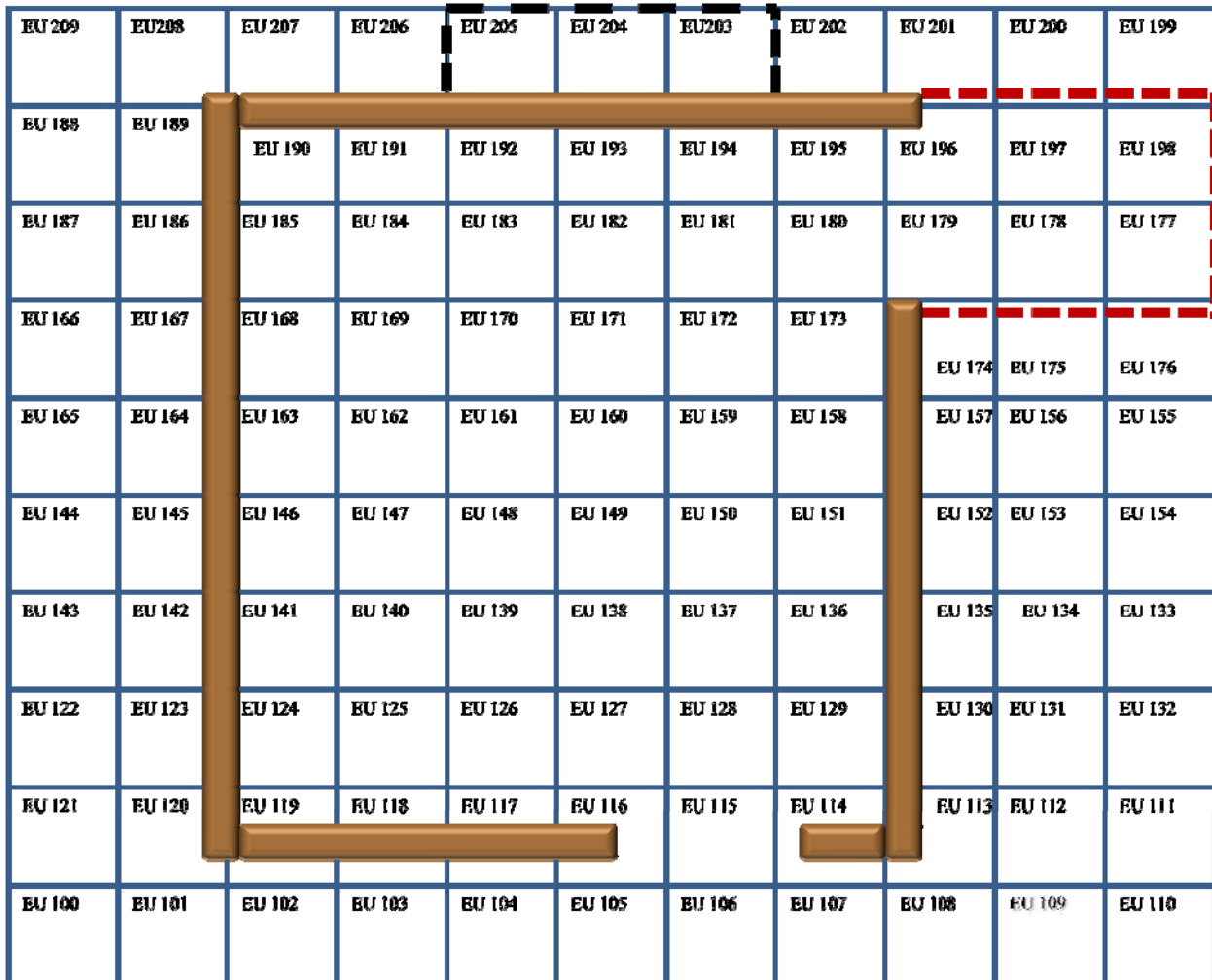


Figure 5.3 Illustration of Excavation Grid with sill logs. Possible shed and snow porch areas are outlined.

Brown rectangles= Remaining sill logs
 Red dotted line= possible lean-to shed
 Black dotted line= possible snow porch

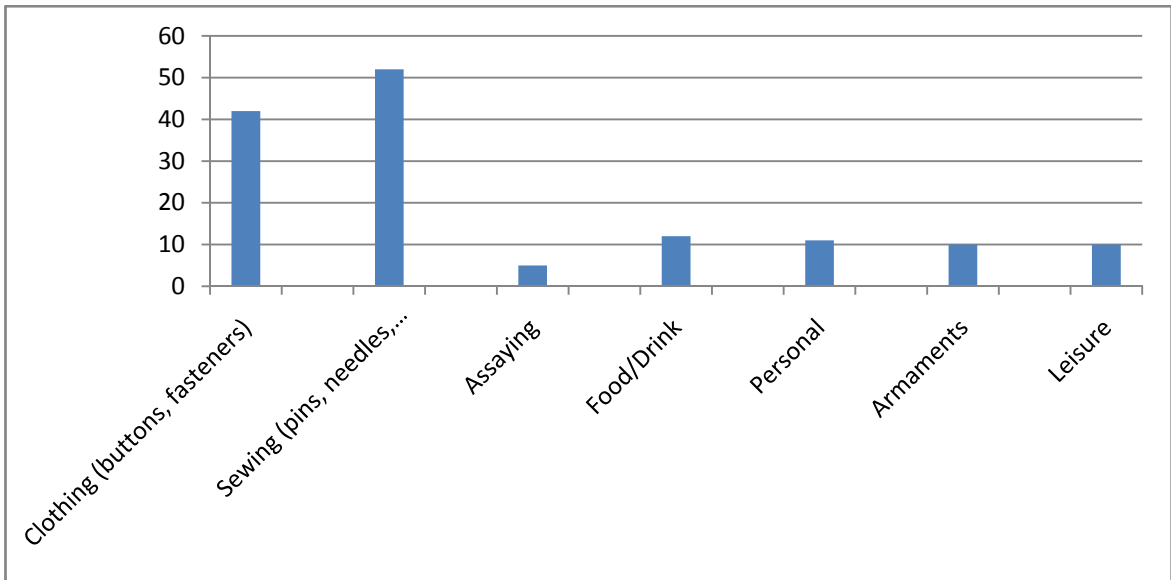


Figure 5.4 Artifact distribution by category from Feature 131.

Artifact Categories

Artifacts recovered from Feature 131 and Feature 177 were organized into seven categories: Food/Drink, Sewing, Clothing, Armaments, Leisure, Assaying and Personal. Food/Drink related items consist of jars, cans, ceramics and faunal remains. The large quantity of sewing pins recovered justified the distinction between artifacts related to sewing and general clothing-related artifacts, which are mostly represented by buttons and other fasteners. Shell casings and shot balls were lumped together under “armaments”, and the leisure category is populated by alcohol and tobacco-related items. Artifacts related to assaying were given their own category, as assaying represents a specialized task within the household. Significant artifacts that did not fit into these categories were grouped under ‘personal’. Construction-related items were omitted from comparative analysis, as the large number of nails recovered were seen to have little interpretive value for understanding household composition.

Feature 131: Food-Related Items

Of all of the artifacts recovered from this feature, food-related items made up a very small percentage (e.g., Figure 5.4). These consist of metal, glass and ceramic artifacts, as well as three bone fragments. Evidence for food-preparation was also found. Evidence for a stove, although found on the surface of the feature, should be noted. Part of a cast-iron stove door, as well as a probable flue door was found. Several pieces of stove pipe were also found, along with two pieces of tin sheeting with semi-circular cut-outs that fit perfectly around the stove pipe fragments. An unidentified substance found in lower strata resembles coke, which may have been used for fuel. A wood or coal-burning stove would have been multifunctional, used for heating as well as food preparation.

Food –Related Items: Metal

A large amount of rusted metal fragments were recovered from Feature 131. Although nearly all of them are probably from deteriorated cans, only a small percentage could be identified as such, using the side seams and ends as indicators. A much smaller number of these can fragments could be identified by type of can, which generally requires the presence of a can lid or closure. A minimum count of cans at this feature is made nearly impossible by the extreme level of decay as well as the very small number of lids and closures.

Interestingly, the metal fragments positively identified as pieces of cans came from only four excavation units. One external friction can lid and several can fragments were found in Unit 197, located in the area of the probable shed. Another external friction lid, along with an unidentifiable can lid fragment, was found in Unit 190, at the northwest corner of the structure. These external friction lids may have come from tobacco tins, but

also may have contained food products. The other unidentifiable can fragments were found in Unit 195 (at the northeast corner of the structure) and Unit 203, located in the snow porch area. No cans were found in the southern half of the structure.

A metal bottle cap was found in Unit 197, which is in the shed area (Figure 5.5). The cap has the word 'CURTICE' and the year '1888' written on it, and is most likely the lid to a Curtice Bros. Ketchup bottle. This type of screw-top lid with scalloped edges was patented by Simeon Curtice in 1888, but it is not known how long the Curtice Brothers used it on their bottles.



Figure 5.5 Curtice Brothers screw-top lid. Courtesy, Roselyn Campbell.

A rectangular metal tag, such as might be found on the drawer at a general store, was found in Unit 115, near the doorway (Figure 5.6). The tag has the word "TEA" written on one side and "COFFEE" written on the other. This is the kind of tag that may have been used at the Mammoth Mercantile, where David Morgan worked. It is interesting to speculate whether David Morgan lived here, and brought materials home from work with him.



Figure 5.6 Metal tag with “COFFEE” and “TEA” printed on it. Courtesy, Roselyn Campbell.

A cornhusker was found on the surface of Unit 184, consisting of a metal shaft with remnants of a leather strap stapled to it (Figure 5.7). It is identical to the cornhusker found in the 1895 Montgomery Ward’s catalogue, and would be used to efficiently separate ears of corn from their outer husks. Cornhuskers are usually associated with the feeding of livestock. The proximity of Feature 131 to a known barn area, in conjunction with the surface provenience of the object, adds to the likelihood that it was moved from a livestock area after the residence was abandoned.



Figure 5.7 Cornhusker.

Food –Related Items: Glass

The only glass artifacts found relating to food were the fragments of a Ball Perfect Mason Jar (Figure 5.8). This jar has the shoulder ledge seal, and one fragment has a raised script ‘B’ used by the Ball Brothers Glass Manufacturing company. Ball began using this script lettering around 1893, and phased out the shoulder-seal jars by around 1910. This jar was found in Unit 194, just inside the structure near the snow porch.



Figure 5.8 Ball Perfect Mason jar. Courtesy, Roselynn Campbell.

Food –Related Items: Ceramics

Only two ceramic bowl bases were recovered from the lower strata. One has a partial maker’s mark that reads, “HOTEL CHINA,” and was found in Unit 195. The other is a partial ironstone bowl that was recovered from Stratum II of Unit 197 (in the shed area) with a thick black residue on the inside. This was identified with a handheld X-Ray Fluorescence Spectrometer (XRF) as being high in lead content. This was most likely reused for some non-food related purpose. Another fragment of this bowl, also covered with black residue, was found on the surface of unit 196. This area may have been disturbed, as four fragments of plate bases were found on the surface of the snow-porch area (Unit 203), while several small ironstone shards were found in Stratum II of

the same unit. Three of the plate fragments had a finer paste that more closely resembled stoneware.

The base of a “Homer-Laughlin Ironstone” bowl was found on the surface of Unit 202, adjacent to the snow-porch. Ironstone “Hotel China,” especially Homer Laughlin ironstone, was very prevalent for the time period of Coloma’s existence as a mining town. The presence of these mendable fragments on the surface as well as the lower strata of the feature provides evidence that all of these fragments likely pertain to the occupation of Feature 131. Those fragments that ended up on the surface were transported through some natural or human-created disturbance(s).

The only decoration found on any ceramic fragment was from a tiny shard of gilded glaze found in Unit 128, near the possible doorway. Since none of the paste is present, we cannot tell what type of ceramic it was. It is interesting that this tiny piece was found on the opposite end of the feature from the rest of the ceramics. This decorated piece may have been associated with a tea set, and thus be the only piece of ceramic present that is clearly linked to food service.

Food –Related Items: Faunal Remains

Only six bones were recovered, three with obvious butcher marks. Only one bone can be identified as to species, the cervical vertebra fragment of a cow. One possible rib fragment was sawed at an angle, indicating butchering. Another rib fragment is from a smaller animal, possibly a deer or sheep/goat. The broken tip of a long bone was found, with no indication of butchering or species. The other two fragments may be halves of the same bone, representing an unfused epiphysis sawed down the center.

Four of these fragments were found in the same unit, unit 106, which is located just outside of the possible doorway. One, the cow bone, was found on the surface, while the two halves of the epiphysis and the unidentified rib fragment were recovered from Stratum II. The other rib fragment was found in Stratum III of the adjacent unit (unit 115) just inside the possibly doorway. The broken tip of the longbone was found in Stratum I of unit 203, in the snow porch area, and may not be associated with the residents of the structure.

Clothing-related Items

Clothing Related: Sewing

A large number of clothing and sewing-related artifacts were found at this feature. Sewing pins are the most ubiquitous, with 52 whole and partial pins recovered. All of these pins are “short whites,” used exclusively for sewing. All but one of these pins were found in the two units inside the possible doorway (unit 115 and unit 128), with 41 out of 52 recovered in unit 128 alone. One lone pin was found on the surface of unit 204, which may have been part of the snow porch. Two complete safety pins were found in units 106 and 115 (the same doorway area), and one fragment which is most likely part of a safety pin was found in unit 197, which is in the shed area.

Clothing Related: Buttons and Fasteners

Thirty-nine buttons and other types of fasteners were also present. Three of these were collar studs- two celluloid and one prosser (Figure 5.9). It is possible that the small prosser stud represents women’s clothing, as these studs were popular fasteners for women’s waistcoats in the 1890s (Lindbergh 1999:52). One prosser four-holed button was found (Figure 5.10), as well as partial and whole shell buttons with a Minimum

Number Indicated (MNI) of four. One four-holed tin button, like those found on men's work coats, was also found. Three hook fasteners and two eye fasteners (Figure 5.11) were found- these could represent corset or dress hooks. Ten snap buttons were found, three with cloth covering intact. Seven metal buttons were found that may have come from jeans or overalls. One button back was found that would have attached to a fabric front piece, this may have been a more decorative button type.



Figure 5.9 Prosser stud.
Courtesy, Roselyn Campbell.

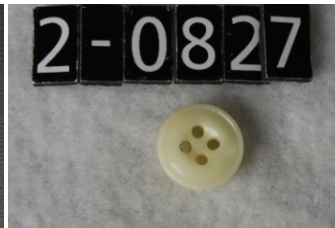


Figure 5.10 Prosser button.



Figure 5.11 Dress hook

Of all of the types of fasteners found, 15 were excavated from one unit, unit 197, located in the shed area. Twenty-three were found in the three units that are inside the possible doorway. One was found in the northwest corner of the structure (unit 159), and one on the snow porch (unit 203). All of the fasteners found in unit 197, except for one shell button, could be associated with work clothing. They consist of metal buttons and rivet-type snaps associated with overalls. One fragment of shell button was found in unit 159, and one metal button or snap, probably from jeans, was found in unit 203.

Three rivets were recovered with denim still attached to them-- the blue color of the denim still visible in some cases. One of these rivets had "B of R" written on it. This indicates "Boss of the Road" brand, a popular type of denim overalls supplied as work clothes for miners from around 1878-1910 (Psota 2002:115). A fairly fancy-looking brass suspender-adjuster was also found, as well as a suspender clip.

Clothing Related: Shoes and Boots

Four shoe eyelets were recovered, along with two boot-lace fasteners. Out of 48 fragments of leather recovered, 14 could be positively identified as parts of shoes or boots. A buttonhook, commonly used for lacing up boots, was found with the words “H. Heil and Sons, LaCrosse, WI” on it (Figure 5.12). It was located in unit 194, near what may have been the doorway leading to the snow porch. H. Heil and Sons were shoe and boot manufacturers. It is likely that promotional items such as buttonhooks were given away with each shoe or boot purchase.



Figure 5.12 H. Heil and Sons buttonhook. Courtesy, Roselynn Campbell.

One amazing find- amazing that it was seen at all- was a tiny yellowish glass bead recovered from Unit 159, located near the middle of the structure. This bead has no hole, and may have been attached with glue to a woman’s hat, dress, or other item.

Armaments

Eight shell casings were recovered from this feature. One Hornaday 22 shell is a post- WWII model, and was found on the surface. Coloma is a popular hunting area up to

the present day, so it is not surprising to find a number of shells from different eras scattered around.

Three WRA 30 Winchester casings were found, one in unit 179 (in the shed area), one in unit 115 (near the possible doorway), and one in unit 203 (on the snow porch). WRA 30 WCF refers to the Winchester Repeating Arms Company, .30 caliber center firing cartridge. The .30-.30 was introduced by Winchester in 1895- by 1932 Winchester was purchased by Western, and the headstamps were changed, indicating that this cartridge was produced before 1932 (Lobdell 1995:70).

One .22 short casing was found (in unit 128) with an “H” on the headstamp. This is a Winchester Repeating Arms .22 short rimfire, produced between 1866 and 1932. Two Union Metallic Company short 22 rimfire cartridges were found in Unit 115. These have a “U” headstamp, and so were made before Union Metallic merged with Remington Arms, placing the date between 1867 and 1902 (IMACS User Guide 1992: 474).

A Winchester “Leader” 12 gauge shell was also found in unit 115, dating from 1894-1950. Three shot balls about 7.5mm diameter (or size “1”) were found, two in unit 115, one in unit 128. These are buckshot of moderate size, and could have been used to shoot deer. One tiny birdshot ball, 2.5mm diameter (or size 7 ½) was found in unit 128. This size is commonly used for hunting quail and rabbits. The ammunition recovered from this feature, while giving some insights into the hunting activities of the household members, provided useful information for determining the date range for occupation of the structure.

Leisure

One possible hinged-lid tobacco tin was found in unit 195, in the shed area. Eight tobacco tin tags were found, 7 of which are most likely from Climax brand tobacco. These seven have a reddish-orange color and some have visible writing on them (Figure 5.13). The other has a slightly different shape, with a hole in the center, but may also be from Climax. Tobacco tin tags were used to identify bricks of plug tobacco, so that retailers could not sell lower-quality tobacco as top-brand. They were often saved, as tobacco companies would exchange them for gifts, much like “camel cash” today (Storino 1995). All of the tin tags were found in the three units just inside the possible doorway- unit 106, unit 115, and unit 128.



Figure 5.13 “Climax” tobacco tin tag. Courtesy, Roselyn Campbell.

One alcohol bottle was found. This was a rectangular bottle with the words “ROXBURY RYE /ROXBURY DIST. CO. BALTIMORE, MD on the sides of it (Figure 5.14). Roxbury Rye was produced from 1893 until 1920, a victim of prohibition (Sullivan 2008). Fragments of this whiskey bottle were found on the surface, as well as in Strata II and III, and were scattered in units 190, 193, 194, 200, and 203. This is a further

indication that at least the North end of the feature had been disturbed, possibly by bottle hunters.



Figure 5.14 Roxbury Rye whiskey bottle. Courtesy, Roselyn Campbell.

Personal Items

One piece of jewelry was found, possibly part of a barrette or pin. It is brass and has a row of flowers with cut glass centers. This was found in Stratum II of unit 128, near the possible doorway. In Stratum III of this unit was found the most precisely dateable artifact of the entire excavation: a Spanish-American War propaganda pin (Figure 5.15). The pin is metal with celluloid, decorated with the words, “Remember the Maine, Free Cuba” and an image of the American and Cuban flags together. The U.S.S. Maine sank under mysterious circumstances off the coast of Cuba in 1898, setting off the war with Spain which also ended in that year. The Montana Territorial Army was the first to arrive for battle. It is likely that a large percentage of these soldiers were also miners, connecting places like Coloma with the country as a whole.



Figure 5.15 Celluloid pin. Courtesy, Roselyn Campbell.

A clasp—probably a watch clasp—was also found in unit 128. A pen nib was found in unit 106, just outside the doorway. A very short pencil, used almost down to the eraser, was found in unit 196, in the shed area. Three chunks of very thick pencil lead were found in unit 190, in the northwest corner of the structure. Two triangular Bakelite comb teeth were found in 106 and 128, as well as what may be part of the comb itself in unit 106. What looks like the end of a bobby pin was found in unit 128.

Fragments of at least three wide-mouthed patent lip bottles or jars were found in units 203 and 204 (the porch area) and unit 197(storage) (Figure 5.16). These bottles have an imprinted circle on the side where a product label should go. There is a high probability that these bottles contained hair pomade, which was a cosmetic product used primarily by men at the time (Bill Lindsey 2010, personal comm.).



Figure 5.16 Possible pomade bottle. Courtesy, Roselyn Campbell.

Assaying Equipment

Artifacts that may have been used for assaying were found as well. At least three scorifiers were recovered, one of which displayed the words, “3 ½ in Battersea Works, England” (Figure 5.17). Several other fragments may represent cupels or crucibles, as they seem to have had smaller diameters. Most of these fragments were clustered around the storage/porch area in units 195, 197 and 203. However, some fragments were also found in unit 190, near the northwest corner of the structure. Since a good deal of this material was found near the surface, it is possible that it has drifted downhill into this unit. Unit 190, being located at the corner of two rotting sill logs, contains a large sinkhole and beetle colony, which may explain why some artifacts have been found here.



Figure 5.17 Battersea Works scorifier. Courtesy, Roselyn Campbell.

Several large chunks of quartz were found streaked with what at first glance appeared to be gold. Most of this was located in unit 195. XRF analysis shows that the streaks are from arsenitic pyrite, which also created many soil stains that were analyzed with the same result. Two hand-forged railroad spikes for small ore-cart rails were found in unit 179, in the storage shed area. Coloma had its own blacksmith who may have made

these for the mining company. A cylindrical, hand-blown glass vial was found in unit 195, with part of its cork still present. Its proximity to the assaying-related artifacts led to the initial identification of the vial as a chemical bottle. It is likely however, that this vial contained patent medicine, as the style and size of the vial is similar to many popular 19th century “medicines.” The bowl fragment with black residue recovered from unit 197 was also thought to have been related to assaying. However, the XRF reading may have been reflecting the high amount of lead in the glaze of the bowl, and not the residue itself.

The Hearth

The U-Shaped hearth found at Feature 131 remains a mystery. Although similar hearths have been associated with Overseas Chinese populations (Merritt 2010), the lack of distinctive Chinese artifacts (such as ceramics) associated with the feature makes this association problematic at Feature 131. Ceramics found on the edge of Coloma indicate that there may have been a Chinese-owned store (Merritt 2010:382). Simple u-shaped hearths have also been found in a logging camp in Australia, and were probably used as platforms for simple wood-burning stoves (Davies 2005: 63). It is strange that this hearth is located outside of the sill logs of Feature 131, with its opening facing the corner of the structure. A possible ash pile is located just within the dripline of the feature, but it is not clear if this represents activities of the original creators of the feature, or if the hearth was disturbed by bottle hunters or even animals, displacing the hearth’s contents.

Samples taken from the inside of the hearth showed no artifacts remaining (Mark Timmons, personal communication, 2010) and XRF samples show the only difference between the soil in the hearth and the surrounding soil to be a heightened level of manganese. So far, we have found no explanation for this difference. Was this hearth

used for cooking before a larger stove was installed at Feature 131? Could a simple assaying furnace have been placed on top of the hearth for crude ore analyses? Further analysis of the area around the hearth, as well as excavation of the possible ash pile may be necessary to answer these questions.

Feature 131: Activity Areas and Discussion

The clearest example of an activity area at Feature 131 is the area consisting of units 106, 115, and 128. The high number of small artifacts found in these three units suggest a cleaning “sweep line” in the vicinity of the doorway at the southern end of the structure. The break in the sill logs in this area and the row of flooring tacks (which ran in a perfect line along the southern end of unit 115) further support this view.

However, the homogeneity of the artifacts recovered from these units could alternatively point to a separate function for the area. The large concentration of sewing pins and clothing fasteners could be evidence of a sewing area, perhaps near the open door for added light. It is also possible that someone merely kept a box or sewing basket here, which was also used to store tobacco tin tags and other odds and ends.

The two units excavated in the shed area (unit 196 and unit 179), suggest the area may have been used for storage of many different types of objects. A pair of “Boss of the Road” overall buttons and leather shoe fragments indicates a place to store work clothing so as not to dirty up the house. The fact that all but one fastener recovered from this area corresponds to work clothing supports this idea.

The artifacts recovered from Feature 131 make up a very small sample, so given the small numbers from each category, it would be difficult to make statistically valid interpretations about the function of the feature—and about the insights these objects can provide about masculinity and households in the mining West during the Victorian era. Some interesting speculations, however, can be made based on the findings here. The number of artifacts associated with food seem surprisingly low, and the presence of so few ceramic and faunal remains could indicate that very little cooking took place within the home. It could also indicate that we did not dig in the right places. Depending on the size and character of the mining camp, many residents chose to take their meals at a boardinghouse or saloon (Conlin 1981). Affordable meals were likely available at the Mammoth Boardinghouse where Charlie Harvey's cooking was well-appreciated (Kimbal 1933). Or, for better ambiance (with gas lighting), one could eat at Richard Estey's "first-class" restaurant for 50 cents (Timmons 2009).

As cooking is often associated with women, one may interpret the small number of food-related artifacts as evidence for an all-male household. However, entire families were known to eat a good number of their meals outside of the home. Often miners would get up early and eat their breakfast at a restaurant before their shift started, while their wives and children would eat out a few hours later (Conlin 1981:47). Their dinners would then be separate also, as the women would not be hungry for dinner as early as their husbands. Cheap meals were in demand in mining camps, as the time spent preparing food could be spent more profitably searching for gold (Conlin 1981:48). While the presence of the Mason jar here may indicate home food preservation, it was

also common for manufacturers to sell preserved food to consumers inside these jars (Lindsey 2010).

The shell casings and shot balls recovered from Feature 131 may also be connected to food procurement. Though Coloma had a meat market as early as 1895 (Timmons 2009), it is likely that residents would supplement their supply through hunting. Shot balls recovered could have been used for hunting deer and smaller game. The small amount of faunal remains appears to confound this interpretation, yet it could be explained (as could the dearth of all food-related items) by the presence of the town dump (Feature 172) just at the bottom of the hill. It is possible that animal remains, which could attract wildlife, would have been transported to the main (town) dump after processing. Spude (2005) argues that hunting was “a manly pursuit” at the turn of the century, and thus associates related artifacts with men. However, there is evidence that women, especially those living on the western frontier, were avid hunters. While this interest in hunting may have arisen out of necessity, it also held recreational value for many women (Stange 2005).

The number of sewing-related artifacts seems large in comparison with the others, but the category is made up entirely of pins—52 sewing pins and three safety pins. The large number of sewing pins can be explained in many ways. Any sewing project in which pins were necessary would use a decent number of them; there would be little reason to be conservative in their use as they are relatively cheap and are sold in large bundles. They are also very easily lost, and thus make their way into the archaeological record rather easily. The concentration of pins in the area near the doorway could be explained by the presence of a sewing basket near the door, or the sweeping of the floor

towards a hole or slit in the floorboards. That being said, the presence of these “short whites” indicates that someone in the household was sewing. Sewing is also traditionally associated with women, yet Johnson (2000) makes it clear that men would also take part in this activity.

The presence of some clothing-related artifacts indicates the presence of women at Feature 131. The hook and eye fasteners recovered (three hook and two eye) are of a specialized type often referred to as “dress hooks.” Although it is possible that they could have been used on men’s clothing, their small size makes it most likely that they came from a corset or a dress. The piece of jewelry recovered, with its floral design, is most likely from a barrette or pin and therefore worn by a woman. The small glass bead has no hole, and these are often referred to as “no-hole” beads. It is difficult to determine what this bead may have been associated with, but it is very possible that it came from a woman’s hat, or even a piece of jewelry.

The artifacts associated with men’s clothing indicate that the men of Coloma made consumer choices based on both functionality and fashion. The remnants of work clothes found in the shed area represent a sensible and functional ensemble: “Boss of the Road” denim overalls and heavy leather work boots. The tin button recovered may have come from a cotton work jacket, which many laborers of the time wore over their overalls as sort of a “uniform” (Psota 2002:113). The purchase of “Boss of the Road” may have had more to do with availability than brand loyalty, as this was the most common brand of denim work clothes excavated from Garnet (Psota 2002:121). They were likely purchased from the Mammoth Mercantile (the company-owned general store), but they may have been purchased out of town, or even ordered from a catalog.

Other items recovered, however, seem to suggest an interest in fashion and respectability. While the prosser stud may have come from a woman's garment, the two larger celluloid studs were likely used to fasten a man's detachable collar to his shirt. The shirt itself may have been adorned with shell or prosser buttons. A decorative buckle indicates the suspenders that were necessary to hold up high-waisted dress slacks. The clasp recovered may have been from an added accessory, a decorative pocket watch. A watch such as this would have almost certainly been worn by a man (Spude 2005:94) and, along with the articles mentioned above, could complete a fashionable man's suit. It is possible that the suit worn by this man was purchased from the town tailor, Mr. Wassenberg, for sixty dollars "without hesitation" as Hilma Hanson recalled "all" of the miners doing (Kimbal 1933).

Further evidence for male concern with fashion (or at least personal hygiene) comes from the three wide-mouthed jars, which most likely contained hair pomade. The celluloid comb teeth recovered may have been used with this product. Contrary to many historians' depiction of Victorian men as being ascetic, they were actually large consumers of cosmetic products such as hair dyes, pomades, skin beautifiers and cosmetic vaporizers (Swiencicki 1998: 781). By the 1880s a "flamboyantly consumerist" type of masculinity emerged from the working and lower-middle class (Swiencicki 1998: 786). This masculinity was expressed through "stylish clothing, fashion, jewelry and smart hairstyles" (Swiencicki 1998: 787). Charlie Harvey, the cook at the Mammoth Boardinghouse, may have adopted this gender strategy, as Hilma noted he always attended dances in evening clothes, with a cape overcoat, silk hat and gloves. Charlie also was careful to always have his moustache waxed (Kimbal 1933).

A fascinating object recovered from Feature 131 is the celluloid Spanish-American War pin. The Montana National Guard were “the first to respond to their country’s call” to go to war with Spain in 1898 (Hines 2002). Over 1,000 men volunteered for duty, many of them miners. While on their way to the Philippines, the U.S. and Spain signed a peace treaty transferring control of the Philippines to the United States. Montanans saw action in the Philippine insurrection that followed (Hines 2002).

Support for the war was widespread among both women and men. While men were joining the National Guard, Montana women were petitioning to serve as nurses. One group of women from Great Falls admitted that they had no nursing experience, but wanted to be sent to the front lines with the local men (Hines 2002:48). These requests were denied. Americans showed their patriotism through clothing and accessories, often with military themes. Red, white, and blue petticoats, fans, ribbons, and parasols were popular. Handkerchiefs, suspenders, and belt buckles were decorated with images of the Maine and the Cuban flag. Military styles were popular for both men and women’s clothing, with faux military buttons, cavalry caps, and dresses in military colors (Schorman 1998).

Tobacco-related artifacts are often associated with men. Middle-class women by the mid-19th century had (at least publicly) given up the practice, and even considered it offensive for men to smoke in their presence (De Cunzo 1995:93). Smoking at this time became associated with sexuality, and women who smoked were seen as sexually available (De Cunzo 1995: 94). Working-class women, however, did not share in these strict middle-class values, and may have even intentionally acted in opposition to them

(De Cunzo 1995: 94). In a working-class setting such as a mining town, tobacco use was very likely common among both men and women.

The Roxbury Rye whiskey bottle, as it was found very near the house, may represent social activities. Hilma Hanson recalls that Mr. Wassenberg, whose tailor shop was in his house, was quite a gambler and storyteller. She also recounts how his house was “a meeting place for many men” (Kimbal 1933). One can imagine these men drinking rye whiskey while listening to Wassenberg’s stories and playing cards. Drinking at home could also be an indication of marital status. While many single miners may have spent their evenings at the saloon (or possibly the reading room), working men with wives and children may have preferred domestic comforts (West 1979: 143). Spude (2005) noted a much higher frequency of alcohol-related artifacts at households with families than those containing only men. Although this could be explained by these men’s domestic tendencies, it could also be evidence of women drinking. The vial recovered from unit 195, if it is indeed a patent medicine bottle, could be further evidence of women indulging in alcohol. Women used patent medicines, with high levels of alcohol and morphine, as they were a more socially acceptable substitute for beer or liquor (Spude 2005:94).

The artifacts related to assaying may have implications about the gender of the inhabitants of Feature 131. If, indeed, they indicate that one inhabitant was a skilled assayer, then it may be likely that Chester Pray lived here, and thus Feature 131 represents an all-male household. As Spude (1990) noted, assayers were more likely than miners to be married and have children, and thus this must also be taken into account. It is difficult to determine, however, if assaying was taking place at Feature 131. The only

material evidence recovered were three scorifiers and the remains of what were probably cupels. Scorifiers were necessary for roasting out the high amounts of arsenic found in the local ore. Evidence for other assaying tools such as scales, a furnace, and various chemical reagents were not found (Phillips 1879). It is possible that some of these materials may remain in unit 197, which was not completely excavated. If so, the area thought to represent a shed could represent a distinct assaying activity area.

The evidence of assaying does not necessarily indicate a skilled assayer was testing ore at Feature 131. Prospectors were well-versed, by such texts as *The Mine Examiner and Prospector's Companion* (Miller 1903), in all methods of assaying. Necessary tools and chemicals were relatively cheap and readily available. The Denver Fire Clay company sold 3 ½ inch scorifiers for \$25.00 per 1000 (Denver Fire Clay Company 1905). Residents of Coloma had an interest in making their own discoveries, and even the tailor Mr. Wassenberg appears to have invested some money in a mining claim (Timmons 2009:46). XRF analysis of soil and ore in the shed area revealed no gold. Soil stains were very high in arsenic, and promising looking chunks of ore were revealed to be arsenitic pyrite. This gives support to the idea that, if someone were assaying in Feature 131, they may have not been particularly skilled at it. It is always possible that quality ore was carefully conserved, but some residue would be expected in the soil if processing were taking place. Yet another explanation for the presence of these artifacts is that someone had found them and was reusing them for another purpose. The presence of ore-cart railroad spikes in the storage area has no readily sensible explanation, except that a resident of Feature 131 enjoyed finding things on the ground and taking them home.

Feature 177: The Dump

About 15 meters south of Feature 131 is a shallow artifact scatter that appears to have been the dump site for the residents of the feature. Though the scatter is shallow, it seems relatively undisturbed. The entire scatter covers roughly 90 square meters, but is only about 13 centimeters deep. Artifacts are concentrated in the southern end of the feature. It is puzzling that, with the town dump (Feature 172) just downhill, the inhabitants of Feature 131 would choose to dispose of their garbage so close to their residence (see Figure 4.1)

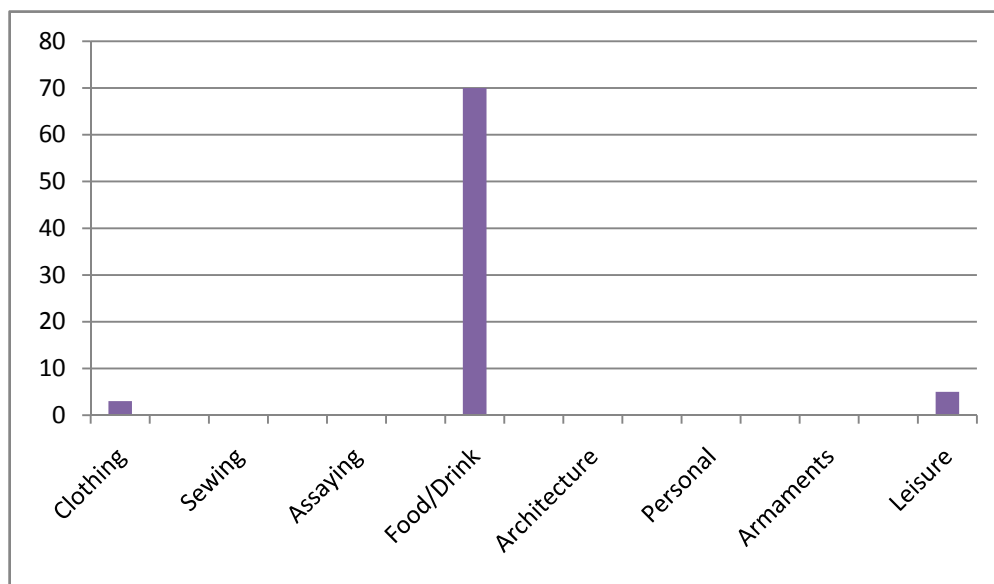


Figure 5.18 Artifact distribution by category from Feature 177.

Feature 177: Food- related items

While the food-related category was among the smaller groups of artifacts at Feature 131, it is by far, the largest category of artifacts in the dump referred to as Feature 177 (Figure 5.18). This suggests that the dump may contain evidence of at least

some of the meals taken by the residents of the structure at nearby Feature 131. Sixty-two whole and partial cans were recovered from this dump. Of these, 19 were too degraded to determine the method of closure. Twenty-nine were hole-in-top, and six were hole-in-cap. Two were press-closures, one crimped, and one screw-top. Seven of the cans were knife-cut, one punctured, one heavily perforated. One can seems to have been opened with a rotary can opener, one had nail holes, and one had a bullet hole.

Seven faunal elements were recovered. Four of these had obvious butchering marks. One is a possible cow bone, cut at both ends. One possible pig leg joint, one a possible knuckle joint, and a possible deer leg joint were also found. The other three fragments are a possible bird bone, a bone from a small terrestrial animal, and something that is completely unidentifiable. Four fruit pits were found that resemble peach pits.

Feature 177: Clothing-related items

Nine shoe fragments were found in the dump, two making up a large sole, with the other seven representing shoe uppers complete with eyelets. A leather strap with what appear to be holes for buttons may have been part of a belt. One small cloth fragment was also found.

Feature 177: Leisure

A minimum of five bottles were recovered from the dump area. One amber bottle base is most likely from a beer bottle, and has “ABGM CO P7” on the bottom, which is Adolphus Busch Glass Manufacturing, who produced bottles from 1886 to 1926. One

green bottle base has a possible kick-up, which may indicate a wine or champagne bottle. At least one “brown” bottle was also found, and is most likely a beer bottle. An amber fragment has an applied finish and probably dates to the 1880s.

Feature 177: Other

The other artifacts found in this dump seem to fall into the hardware category, including a bit of wire, a crushed bucket, and a piece of galvanized pipe. No ceramics, ammunition, or personal items were found here, although this particular scatter does not show any obvious signs of being disturbed.

Feature 177: Discussion

Artifacts related to food and drink make up the majority of those found at Feature 177. Since almost no evidence of cooking or eating was found at Feature 131, the contents of this dump are important for completing the picture of that feature as a domestic household. Although the number of cans recovered from Feature 177 seems significant (62 whole and partial), the small number of faunal remains (7) seems to indicate a much less work-intensive cooking trend. Meat was central to foodways in 19th Century mining camps (Schmitt and Zeier 1993:22), and its scarcity here may indicate that meat-rich meals were taken at a boardinghouse or restaurant. Households in 19th century mining camps ran the spectrum from those that prepared meals on a regular basis,

those that prepared meals on an infrequent basis, and those where no food preparation took place at all (Schmitt and Zeier 1993:23). The regularity of food preparation was dependent on the presence of a female or unemployed male in the household; those with regularly prepared meals most likely represented a family or a large group of males (Schmitt and Zeier 1993:23). The small number of faunal remains found at this feature may indicate that Feature 131 was a household where meals were prepared infrequently. However, it is just as likely that someone discarded faunal materials at Feature 172, the town dump; unfortunately, there is no way to tell.

It is possible that the inhabitants of Feature 131 used the town dump regularly in other seasons, and that Feature 177 represents refuse behavior in severe winter conditions. Winters in Coloma could be very extreme—in 1894 the temperatures at night ranged from 8 to 22 degrees below zero (Timmons 2009). The use of Feature 177 as a dump, then, may have coincided with a period of time in which the inhabitants of Feature 131 were relying on canned foods and that they deposited the cans as close as possible to their house to avoid walking to the dump in the cold weather. Again, though, there is no way to tell for sure.

The bottles recovered here most likely all represent beer bottles except one, which possibly contained wine or champagne. These represent more evidence of drinking within the home that might indicate the presence of women. Coloma had several saloons and a dance hall that could fulfill men's need for male companionship. Drinking at home may represent the increased interest in domestic life over public activities.

When we focus on the male-specific artifacts here, we notice that this man owned both work and formal clothing. The hair pomade and watch clasp also point to a version

of masculinity concerned with fashion and personal appearance. Although it is not possible to determine the gender of those in the household performing certain activities, investigating artifacts such as sewing pins within the context of masculinity studies informs us that these implements cannot be automatically associated with women. In the next chapter I will use a comparative approach to see if there is a pattern in the artifacts here that indicates the gender of the residents of Feature 131.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Home- yes, home is the one perfectly pure instinct that we have...when the world but knows us as men of pleasure or men of business, when externally we seem to have taken our places in professions, and are no longer single beings, but integral parts of the large social being; at home, when we come home, we lay aside our mask and drop our tools, and are no longer lawyers, sailors, soldiers, statesmen, clergymen, but only men (Froude 1849: 102-103).

Data Analysis

The archaeological data recovered from this investigation proves to be rather ambiguous. While male-specific and female-specific artifacts are present, it is difficult to determine the precise effects that gender had on the material culture of this household. Thus, my goal to integrate household archaeology, gender, masculinity, and the mining West using the evidence from Features 131 and 177 became a major challenge. First, I had to determine how engendered signatures might be manifest on any given household, and so I turned to a model proposed by Catherine Spude (2006).

If Spude is correct, the influence of gender on the archaeological record may be visible in the relative frequencies of different types of artifacts recovered from an assemblage. Here I draw on parts of Spude's method to compare the artifacts from Features 131 and 177 with predictive assemblages used by Spude in her investigations. While Spude's method was initially laid out in her 1991 thesis, it has since been refined. The classification methods and predictive assemblages used here are those described in Spude's report on the Mascot Saloon (Spude 2006). The first step in utilizing this method was to combine the artifacts recovered from Features 131 and 177 into one assemblage, which is justified by the interpretation that all artifacts were likely associated with one household. I then used Spude's artifact classification system to organize this assemblage, the results of which are laid out in the table below (Table 6.1). The numbers of artifacts

from each of Spude's categories were then divided by the total number of artifacts being studied (Spude excludes construction-related materials from her calculations, as well as artifacts with preservation issues, such as tin cans and textiles). The distribution of artifacts from Features 131 and 177 can be seen in Figure 6.1.

Category	Description	MNI
<hr/>		
<i>Liquor-Related</i>		6
	Whiskey Bottle, "Roxbury Rye"	1
	Amber bottle base, "ABGM CO P7", Adolphus Busch Glass Manufacturing	1
	Wine or champagne bottle base	1
	Beer or liquor bottle	3
<i>Food Serving</i>		6
	Bowl, "HOTEL CHINA", Ironstone	1
	Bowl, ironstone with black lead residue	1
	Bowl, Homer-Laughlin Ironstone	1
	Plate, Ironstone	2
	Unidentified glaze sherd with gilt edge	1
<i>Food Storage</i>		2
	Preserving jar, Ball Perfect Mason	1
	Bottle cap, Curtice Bros. Catsup	1
<i>Other Household</i>		6
<hr/>		

Lamp Chimney	1
Key	1
Tin label," COFFEE" on one side, "TEA" on the other	1
Pencil	1
Pencil Lead	1
Stove part	1
<i>Pharmaceutical</i>	<i>1</i>
Vial, hand blown	1
<i>Generic Personal</i>	<i>70</i>
Sewing pins, "short whites"	36
Safety pins	3
Button, prosser four-holed	1
Buttons, shell	4
Snap buttons	10
Button back	1
Shoe eyelets	4
Shoe lace fasteners	2
Shoes or boots	3
Buttonhook, "H. Heil and Sons, LaCrosse, WI"	1
Comb, bakelite	1
Pin, celluloid, "Remember the Maine, Free Cuba"	1
Pomade jars	3

Category	Description	MNI
<i>Female-Related</i>		7
	Corset or dress hooks	3
	Corset or dress eye fastener	2
	Jewelry, barrette or pin, brass flowers with cut glass centers	1
	Bobby pin	1
<i>Male-Specific</i>		17
	Collar studs, celluloid	2
	Collar stud, prosser	1
	Button, tin, four-holed	1
	Buttons, jeans or overalls	7
	Rivets, "Boss of the Road"	3
	Suspender clip	3
	Suspender adjuster	1
	Watch clasp	1

	1
<i>Tobacco-Related</i>	8
Tobacco tin tags, "Climax"	7
Tobacco tin tag, unidentified brand, round with hole in center	1
<i>Armaments</i>	10
Shell casings, "WRA 30 WCF", Winchester .30-.30	3
Shell casing, "H", Winchester .22 short rimfire	1
Shell casing, "U", UMC .22 rimfire	2
Shell casing, "Winchester Leader", 12 gauge	1
Shot balls, size 1	3
<i>Other Artifacts</i>	9
Pencil	1
Pencil lead	1
Scorifiers, Battersea Works	3
Cupels or crucibles	2

Table 6.1. Artifacts from Features 131 and 177.

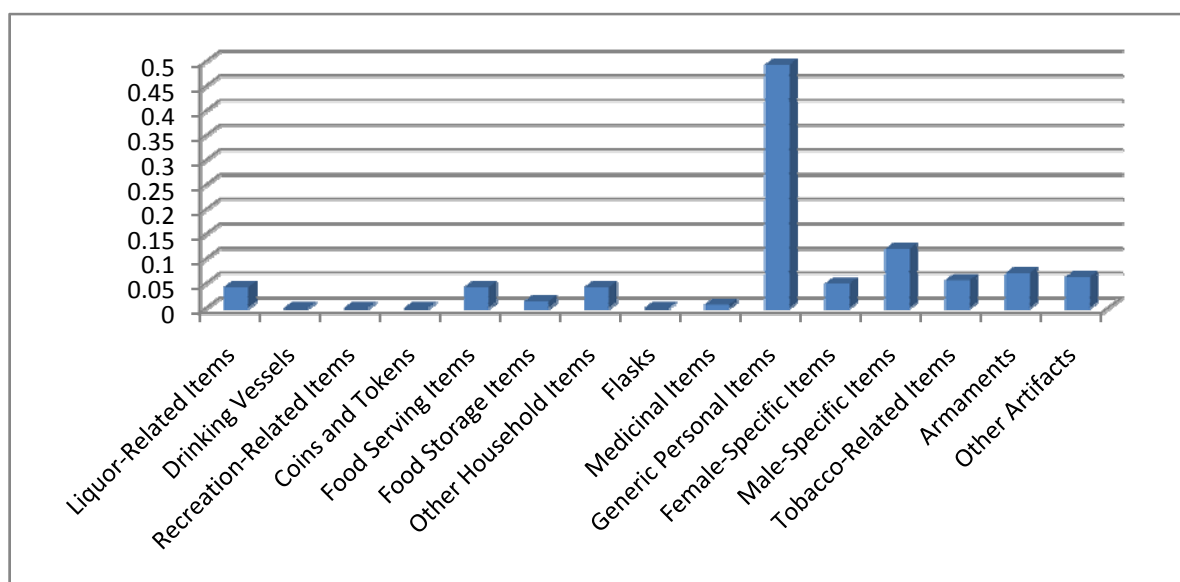


Figure 6.1. Artifact distributions from Features 131 and 177.

In order to be consistent with Spude's collection methods, smaller artifacts that would fall through a ¼ inch screen were left out of the calculations (Spude 2006: 308). It is not possible to know how many sewing pins would have been recovered from the screen, thus I have included all of the 36 complete pins here and left out the fragments. The small glass bead and birdshot ball were left out of the comparison for the same reason.

The most noticeable feature of the artifact distribution for Features 131 and 177 is the high percentage of generic personal items. Sewing pins make up more than half of these artifacts. Other artifacts in this category are buttons that could be associated with

clothing of either gender. The three pomade jars were also put into this category; although commonly associated with men, pomade could also have been used by women as well. The second-largest category is that of male-specific items, made up of items relating to men’s clothing and other adornments, such as the watch clasp. The percentage of food service artifacts (plates and bowls) is equal to that of liquor-related artifacts, with both categories being fairly small. Artifacts associated with assaying were placed in the “other artifacts” category.

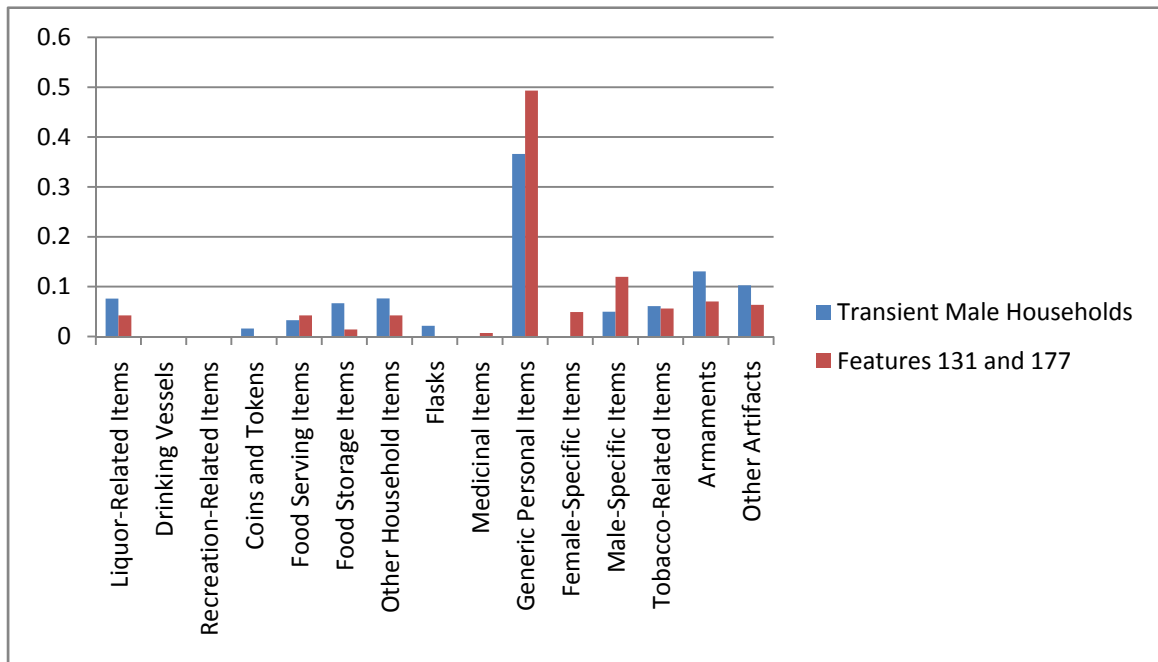


Figure 6.2. Comparison of artifact frequencies with “Transient Male Households” predictive assemblage.

Spude generated the predictive assemblage called “Transient Male Households” by combining data from a gold mining district, a logging camp, and a railroad camp (Spude 2006: 309-310). One noticeable difference between this assemblage and that from Coloma is the presence of female-specific artifacts found at Feature 131 (Figure 6.2). The female-specific artifacts consist of a piece of very feminine jewelry and corset or dress hooks. The evidence for women’s clothing here indicates a woman living in the

household. While the occasionally button may be lost outside of the home, it is very unlikely that a woman would lose the fasteners from a corset or dress so easily. The presence of such artifacts in one of Spude's assemblages would likely rule it out for placement in the transient male category.

However, the other artifact categories show some similarities. Spude notes that transient male households often include very few domestic artifacts or artifacts associated with food, with personal artifacts dominating the assemblages (Spude 2006: 309). This has been explained by the fact that the transient men occupying such households tended to take their meals elsewhere; hence the archaeology of their households displays a noteworthy absence of food and kitchen-type artifacts. Likewise, relatively small numbers of liquor and beer bottles indicated that most drinking was done outside of the home, and this is yet another trait of Spude's transient male households (Spude 2006: 309). These characteristics—small numbers of domestic, food, and alcohol-related materials—appeared among the assemblages from Features 131 and 177. While there are a number of explanations for this similarity, it is quite possible that transience itself may be affecting the material record here more than gender.

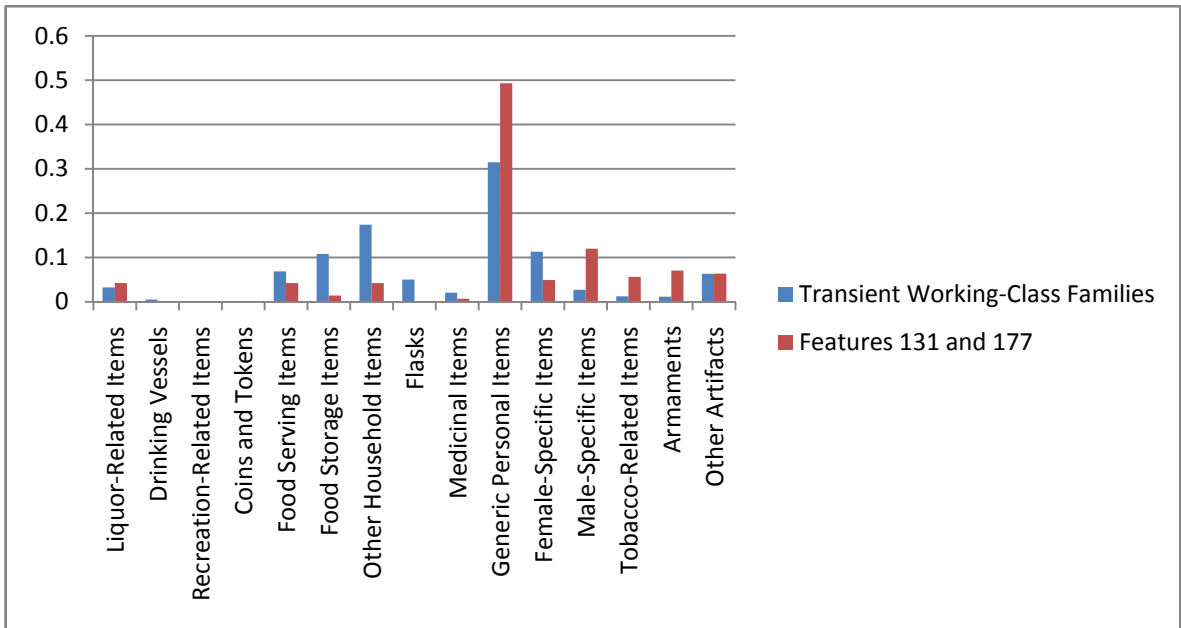


Figure 6.3. Comparison with “Transient Working-Class Families” predictive assemblage.

In order to see how much of an effect transience had on Features 131 and 177, I compared the assemblage to the “Transient Working-Class Families” predictive assemblage (Figure 6.3), generated with data from temperate working-class households in California and Nevada (Spude 2006: 308). Spude’s working class family assemblage is characterized by a high frequency of generic personal items such as that seen in the all-male households. Evidence for women is also strong in this assemblage. Although still low in frequency, the artifacts associated with food service and storage are much more prevalent in Spude’s predictive assemblage than in Features 131 and 177. It is noteworthy that 548 of the artifacts used to create Spude’s predictive assemblage came from a well in Oakland associated with a family that included children (Spude 2006: 308). It is quite likely therefore, that the presence of children in Spude’s working class family example affected the amount of food preparation and storage in the household. A working-class family in Oakland, unlike the transient communities living in mining camps, probably did not eat outside of the home on most occasions. Moreover, there is no evidence for

children at Features 131 and 177, which renders Spude’s working-class family assemblage problematic for comparison to Features 131 and 177.

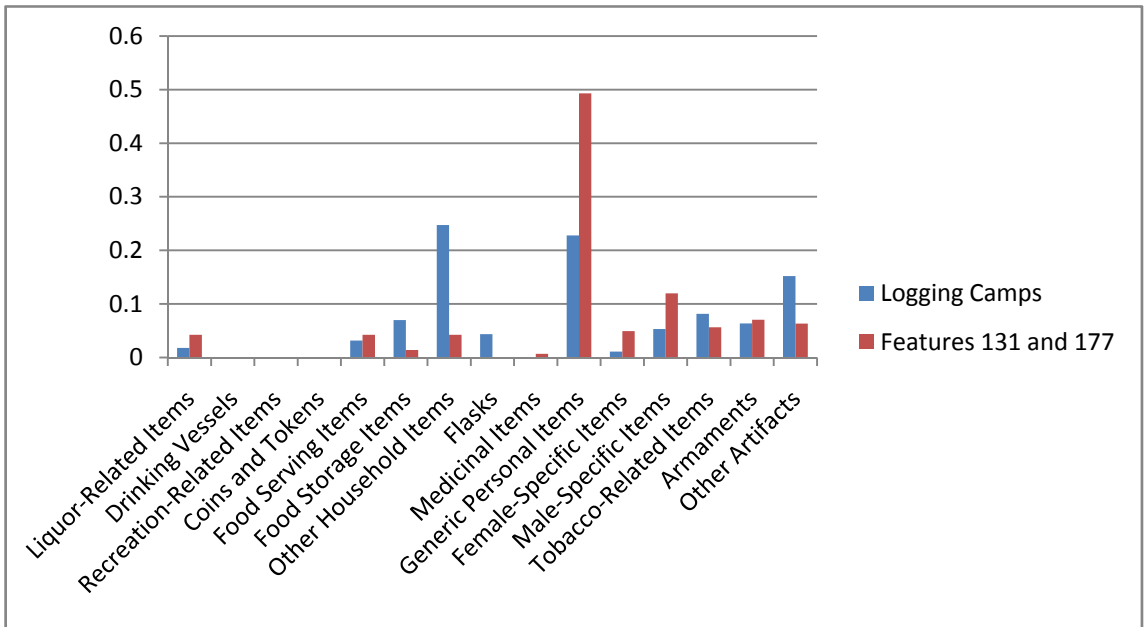


Figure 6.4. Comparison with “Logging Camps” predictive assemblage.

With the expectation that a logging camp may provide a more appropriate set of data for comparison to understand a transient household in the mining West, Spude’s “Logging Camp” predictive assemblage was included, and this was generated from artifacts associated with a cookhouse, bunkhouse, dump, and boss’s cabin at Bingham’s Logging Camp in Oregon (Spude 2006: 310). Logging camps, like mining towns, were populated mostly by men, although women were often present (Spude 2006: 310). There is some similarity in the frequencies of artifacts here (Figure 6.4), and the frequency of generic personal items would be almost exactly the same between Coloma and the predictive assemblage if sewing pins were left out of the comparison. The larger frequency of “other” household items could be explained by the artifacts needed for food preparation at a cookhouse. The “other” artifacts in the predictive assemblage represent items associated with logging, such as saws and chisels (Spude 2006: 310).

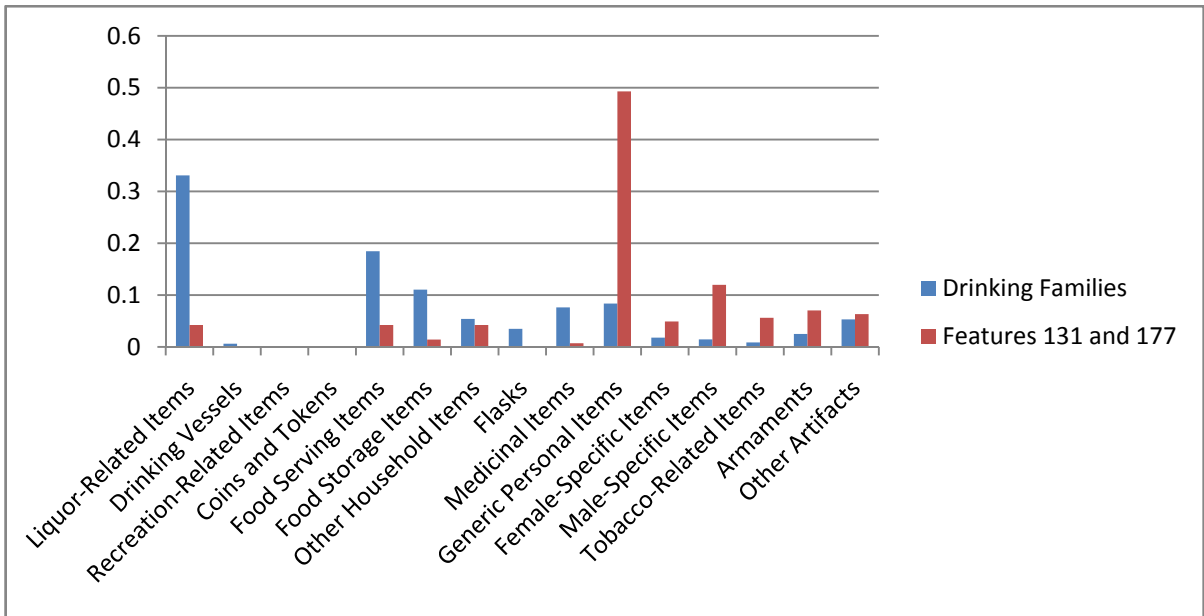


Figure 6.5. Comparison with “Drinking Families” predictive assemblage.

The “Drinking Families” predictive assemblage (Figure 6.5) is characterized by a very high frequency of beverage containers that dwarfs all other artifact types (Spude 2006: 304). This frequency is much higher than that found at Features 131 and 177, as is the frequency of artifacts related to food service and storage. The predictive assemblage seems to reflect the tendency of these families to limit eating and drinking activities to inside the home, while the residents of Feature 131 may have spent a good deal of time in saloons and restaurants or boardinghouses. Plus, much like the differences in the working-class family assemblage, the major distinction here may be the factor of “family” here, which leads to the assumption that the residents of Feature 131 did not likely represent a “family” with a male and female head of household and children.

Taking the family factor to another class level, the “Skagway Middle-Class Families” predictive assemblage is characterized by a large number of decorated dishes, five times that found in the “Drinking Families” assemblage (Figure 6.6). It also has a much smaller frequency of liquor-related items (Spude 2006: 305). The high frequency

of artifacts related to food service and storage contrast sharply with that found at Features 131 and 177. The very low frequencies of male-specific items, tobacco-related items, and armaments also point to a significant difference between the material culture of Feature 131 and that of a middle-class family.

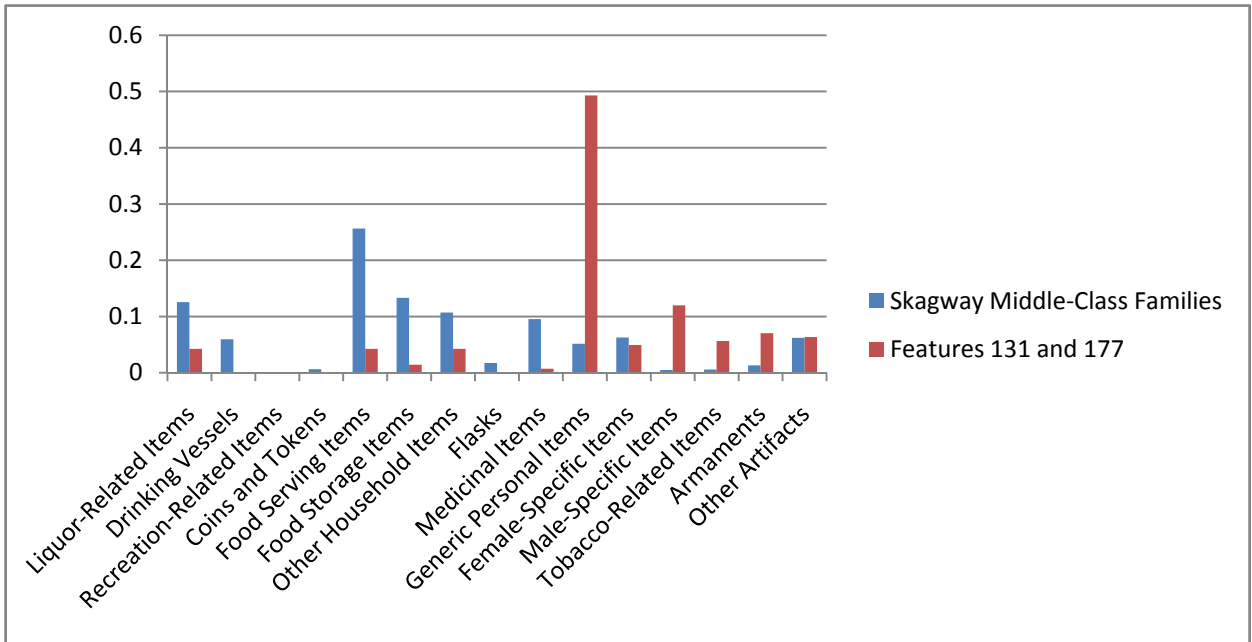


Figure 6.6. Comparison with “Skagway Middle-Class Families” predictive assemblage.

The last predictive assemblage used for comparison here is the “Oakland Temperate Families” assemblage (Figure 6.7). Artifacts were recovered from the trash pits of eight households in Oakland, California dating between 1880 and 1920. The assemblage is characterized by a high frequency of food storage items and undecorated dishes. Both medicinal and liquor-related artifact frequencies are much lower than in the drinking families or middle-class families (Spude 2006: 306). The most significant differences between the temperate families predictive assemblage and that of Features 131 and 177 are much higher frequencies of food storage and service items in the predictive assemblage. The predictive assemblage also has much lower frequencies of male-specific, tobacco-related, and armament-related items.

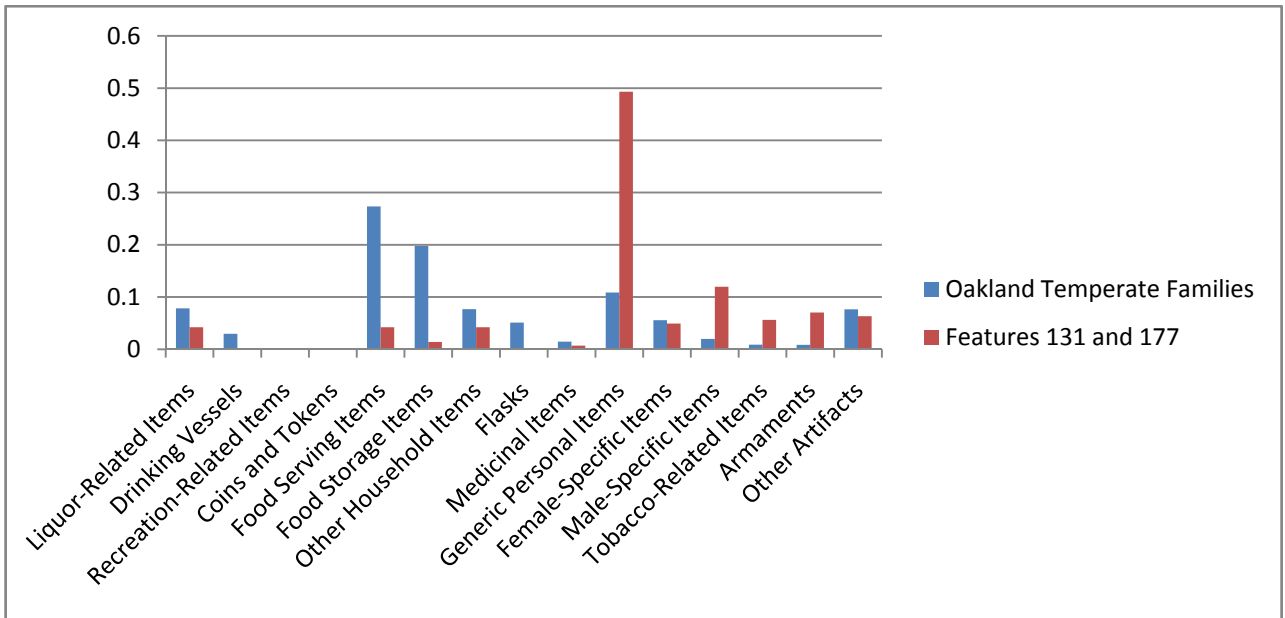


Table 6.7. Comparison with “Oakland Temperate Families” predictive assemblage.

Discussion

The small number of artifacts from Feature 131 and 177 used for this comparison (n=142) makes a statistically valid conclusion difficult. While Spude might go on to use multiple linear regression to determine the similarities between the predictive assemblages and that from Features 131 and 177, I have found it more illuminating to do a straightforward comparison between artifact frequencies. In this way it is easier to pick apart which artifact categories are influencing the overall profile, and discuss what could be causing the differences. It is always possible that the discrepancies between my assemblage and the predictive assemblages are due to a difference in field recovery methods and sampling.

The artifacts from Features 131 and 177 have similar frequencies to the “Transient Male” assemblage, with the noticeable distinction of containing female-specific artifacts. While a female was likely present in the household, it seems that the presence of at least one man--and possibly a more transient situation--overshadowed the

female's influence over the material record. This female influence is visible in family assemblages presented by Spude's predictive model in the form of artifacts related to food service and storage, and materials such as liquor bottles that indicate more leisure time being spent inside the home.

This investigation has produced more questions than answers. I summarize these questions and attempt to answer them below. First, did an assayer live at Feature 131? It is possible that assaying was taking place at the feature, and the presence of scorifiers supports this theory. However, the presence of a considerable amount of arsenitic pyrite ore and the absence of any gold residue in the soil make it unlikely that a *skilled* assayer was present here.

Second, who was sewing here? Although men in the 19th century were known to sew and men clothes (Johnson 2000), the presence of items associated with women's clothing in nearby proximity to sewing pins suggests a woman may have been sewing here. An interesting possibility is that Feature 131 represents Mr. Wassenberg, the tailor's, house in which case a man would have been doing the sewing; although a woman (his wife) was also present in the household. One would expect, however, a great many more sewing-related artifacts in such a context (see for example, Praetzellis and Praetzellis 2009).

Third, why did the residents of Feature 131 dispose of their garbage so close to the house, when the town dump was right down the hill? It is possible that the residents of this feature were not as concerned with hygiene as some of the other people living at Coloma or that they only deposited trash that might have developed an unpleasant odor at the town dump down the hill. The dump at Feature 177 could also represent refuse from a

harsh winter, when travelling too far from the warmth of the house may have been dangerous. Fourth, why are there so few food-related artifacts here? The small amount of ceramics and faunal remains may be the product of a very small period of occupancy of the structure. It also may reflect the trend in mining towns of eating a majority of meals outside of the house (Schmitt and Zeier 1993). It is also, as always, possible that food-related artifacts remain at Feature 131, perhaps concentrated in an area that was not excavated.

While it is not possible to answer any of these questions with certainty, this project has at least contributed to the archaeology of men in a domestic context. By questioning assumptions made about the separation of spheres, domestic artifacts that may have been automatically attributed to women (such as sewing pins) have been shown to have possible associations with men. The pomade jars represent another such artifact, as the role of men as consumers of cosmetic products has been shown to be a component of Victorian men's notions of masculinity. By focusing on male-specific artifacts within the context of masculinity studies, clothing-related artifacts take on a new meaning. The fact that one man wore both work clothes--Boss of the Road overalls and a work coat--and used formal clothing accouterments, such as fancy collar studs, a pocket-watch, and decorated suspender clips, paints a different picture of the men who lived and worked in the mining West.

This is further highlighted by Hilma Hanson's diary, in which she recalls that the miners "all ordered tailor-made suits paying \$60 for a suit without hesitation" (Kimbal 1933). Sixty dollars was a full month's salary for Hanson, and obviously a significant amount of money for a miner. The consumer habits of these men tell us something about

the way they sported their masculinity. Another clue about the miner's concept of manliness can be found in Hilma's diary, as she described her trip down to the Mammoth Mine selling tickets to the dance. The dance was a fundraiser to renew her contract and keep the schoolhouse running. None of the miners refused, and Hilma commented that "miners are always free givers in a good cause" (Kimbal 1933). There were only 16 children attending the school; hence the majority of these miners would not directly benefit from the presence of a schoolteacher. Collectively, the miners' generosity and expenditures on themselves may be a result of the fact that they had disposable income and no families.

While disposable income among a transient male group is certainly among the factors at play here, the combined archaeological and historical evidence from Coloma seems to point to a concern on the part of these men-- mostly single miners--with respectability, and with community. While often characterized as passive objects of women's community-building activities, it is worth noting that these men's consumer activities indicate that they were active agents in promoting a certain type of manliness that involved supporting their community while presenting themselves respectably. Coloma's boom as a mining town coincided with a cultural shift sometimes called a "masculinity crisis" (Bederman 1995). Men felt a strong tension between domestic and public aspects of masculinity, and between notions of respectability and physical strength. Much research has been focused on masculinity in the public sphere, namely saloons and men's organizations, such as unions and all-male clubs (West 1979). Historical archaeology is severely lacking in data regarding men's involvement in the domestic sphere and the activities that constituted their private lives. Physical remains

recovered from within the household, when used in conjunction with historical sources, can greatly inform this underrepresented area of inquiry.

Household archaeology could contribute greatly to our understanding of masculinity in the late 19th century by focusing on male-specific artifacts and the effect of the presence of men on the material culture of the household. Utilizing Lawrence's (1999) interpretive method, while focusing on male-specific rather than female-specific artifacts, can help researchers to determine the effects of men on the domestic material record. Spude's (2006) comparative method provides researchers studying households tools for investigating the effects of gender, transience, and class on their assemblages. Inserting men into gender-based studies is essential for understanding the lives of men and women of the past. Recognizing that men also have gender, that they experience tension between different concepts of masculinity, and that they actively select varying gender strategies can help archaeologists to minimize bias from their research. This investigation of one household at Coloma has, more than anything, highlighted the need for the integration of masculinity into all investigations within historical archaeology.

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Appendix A

Feature 131 Artifact Catalogue
Microsoft Access Database, file name: ColomaF131.mdb
Last updated 8/13/2010

Appendix B

Feature 177 Artifact Catalogue
Microsoft Access Database, file name: ColomaF177.mdb
Last updated 9/18/2009