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White and King: *The Archaeological Survey Manual*

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#### **Author**

Jones, Terry L.

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and challenge history. Within that context, historical archaeologists have come to recognize that the presence of similar materials does not necessarily imply similar ways of thinking. Hence, the critical importance of context for understanding differences in meaning and artifact use among groups.

The third section offers what Little terms a “windshield survey” of historical archaeology—a look at some concrete examples that illustrate the themes introduced earlier in the book. Here, she considers the survival of the Jamestown colony, Mission San Luis de Talimali near Tallahassee, enclosures in medieval England, life in Annapolis, convicts in Australia, African-American experiences, industrialization at Harpers Ferry, working class experiences in West Oakland, and studies of modern garbage in Tucson.

The book concludes with a section that explores a number of ways historical archaeologists are embracing public archaeology as an opportunity to do more than just share knowledge. In addition to educating the public, Little considers the efforts some practitioners are making to engage disenfranchised groups and descendant

communities in the conduct and outcomes of historical archaeology. Here the book returns full circle to the issue of social relevance. Instead of writing archaeologies about people, Little discusses how some practitioners are writing them *with* descendant communities. That collaborative approach can—in Little’s words—“stimulate and empower local community members, visitors, and scholars to make historically informed judgments about heritage and the ways that we use it in the present.” This is good food for thought. It demonstrates the transformative power of a fully engaged archaeology as a tool of civic engagement, with lessons for the dilemmas we face in the present moment.

## REFERENCES

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## *The Archaeological Survey Manual*

Gregory G. White and Thomas F. King  
Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press Inc., 2007, 188 pp.,  
extensively illustrated, bibliography, 4 appendices, index,  
\$29.95 (paperback), \$69.00 (hardback).

### Reviewed by Terry L. Jones

Department of Social Sciences, California Polytechnic  
State University, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407-0329

Anyone who has ever taught an archaeological field class knows how difficult it can be to develop a list of readings to complement the field exercises. Field classes, of course, represent the ultimate in hands-on learning. Students

take field classes to learn the actual experience of living in the field, discovering archaeological sites and artifacts, and recording them; reading about these activities is a far cry from actually engaging in them, and no one really likes to read about field methods when they’re actually in the field. In addition, there can often be a plethora of more important things to do after the end of a day in the field than read about methods. Nonetheless, no educational experience can ever be considered complete or adequate unless the hands-on lessons are accompanied by reading assignments. Greg White, Tom King, and Left Coast Press have done the discipline a tremendous service by developing a manual for archaeological field survey that will serve as a perfect reader for any field

class involving survey. The book will also be useful for land managers who might be only partially conversant with archaeological methodologies, and it should also serve as a good general reference. Field class students and their instructors, however, are the ones who stand to benefit the most from this well-put-together manual.

The importance and value of this book cannot be overstated. While there are increasing political complications involved in archaeological excavation and growing attempts to limit such destructive research, the demand for archaeological survey has only increased with time. Nevertheless, survey is often overlooked in field classes, at least in part because it requires a completely different set of skills than excavation. While Tom King published a highly useful archaeological survey manual in 1978, this new book is really the first truly comprehensive manual on survey. It provides a thorough compendium of every aspect of survey—from its history within the disciplines of archaeology and cultural resource management to practical information on orienteering and mapping—including copies of site record forms. The authors even provide a North Arrow/Scale template that can be scanned or Xeroxed onto card stock to carry into the field.

The highlight of the book is a series of clear, richly illustrated chapters that provide practical information on the eclectic set of skills that one must master in order to conduct archaeological survey effectively. White and King are the first to put all of these skills together in one place and to explain them with such clarity. They start with a chapter on compass use that includes an illustration of a compass of the type that most archaeologists actually use in the field (a Silva Ranger). Rarely do archaeological methods books include such thorough, well-illustrated explanations for things like the difference between true and magnetic north, how to adjust declination, or read azimuths. These are often challenging subjects for students unaccustomed to spending much time outside, and the chapters that White and King have compiled on these topics will help enormously in getting these important concepts across. The compass chapter is followed, in turn, by chapters on orienteering (in which they explain basic map information, contour lines [often another challenge for students], triangulation, map symbols, map use [explaining such things as Township and Range,

UTMs], and GPS [with illustrations of real GPS units]). These are followed by chapters that describe prefield research, research design, types of surveys, and field surveying methods. If there is any downside at all to this book, it comes in the form of occasional murkiness on the distinction between surveys precipitated by academic questions and those mandated by CRM. In my experience, dividing valleys up into quadrants and subjecting them to stratified random sampling is an academic exercise that is rarely undertaken in CRM contexts today because it's not compatible with situations where all potential resources may be subject to impact (although see Yatsko 2000 for an exception). Certainly students need to know about predictive survey, but they need also to fully understand its goals, objectives, and limitations.

Following this discussion, the book returns to its strength: clear information on specific techniques of field survey. Chapters 10–13 provide coherent explanations on how to run transects, what to look for, and how to complete site maps and records. Again, the clarity and thoroughness of these descriptions are unprecedented in archaeological methods texts. These are the procedures that we all follow, but no one before has explained them so well. The last chapter of the book deals with professionalism, touching on the issues of confidentiality and the realities of working with individuals, Native American groups, and government agencies. The text is followed by four appendices, including an excellent listing of web sites for each state, detailing their specific standards for archaeological survey.

While archaeological excavation gets all the glory in Indiana Jones and Lara Croft films, real archaeologists know that the heart and soul of the discipline is actually survey. This book will almost certainly become a standard text for field classes in California and beyond for decades to come, since it is the only thorough, realistic, and up-to-date manual on this essential part of the archaeological research process.

## REFERENCE

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