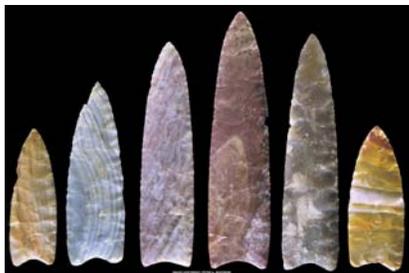


Archaeotext

*The Newsletter of the Norwalk Community College
Archaeology Club and
The Archaeology As An Avocation Program*



Club Meetings – Spring Academic Semester

Save These Dates! -

Feb 13 - Thurs 8:00 pm

Film Night!

Easter Island

GenRe Forum East Campus

March 13 - Thurs 8:00 pm

**Bronze Age Mongolia
Room E-229 East Campus**

April 10 - Thurs 8:00 pm

**Human Sacrifice in Late
Shang China**

**Culinary Arts Dining Room
West Campus**



**March 13 - Thursday - Lecture 8:00 pm
Room E-229 - East Campus
Khirigsuurs of Mongolia
Jargal Burentogtokh - Yale University**

**April 10 - Thursday - Lecture 8:00 pm
Culinary Arts Dining Room - West Campus
Bioarchaeological Investigations of
Human Sacrifice in Late Shang China
Daniela Wolin - Yale University**

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Top Photo: Drake Clovis Cache, Colorado

Jargalan Burentogtokh's research focuses on the region of one of the most widely spread monuments in Mongolia, his native country, and Siberia, known as "khirigsuurs". A khirigsuur is a structure including a central mound and a round or square surrounding frame. Usually the area between mound and frame is left open and within it may be rays (radiae) aligned with the cardinal directions or their subdivisions. Small circular altars are usually found outside the frame on the north, west, and south sides, rarely on the east side. In some parts of Mongolia, khirigsuur appear to have sometimes functioned as burials but not in all cases. Khirigsuur are dated to the Bronze Age (second– first millennium BCE).

The existing theories relate the origin of these monuments with status and social differentiation. However not all of them turn out to be burials at all, thus archaeologists

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Over the course of her four years earning a B.A. at Skidmore College, Daniela Wolin participated in archaeological excavations in various US states and Quebec, Canada. After graduation she spent a year teaching English language and culture classes at Sun Yat-Sen University in Guangdong Province, China. Since attending Yale, Daniela has focused on the analysis of human remains and investigating human sacrifice and warfare in the Late Shang Dynasty (ca. 1250-1050 BCE) from a bioarchaeological perspective.

The somewhat macabre nature of human sacrifice tends to be sensationalized as a practice that is both exotic and barbaric; however, studies that position human sacrifice in its cultural context illuminate socio-political, economic, and ritual practices as well as a more general discussion of why sacrifice – rather than being the exception – appears

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Redding Historical Exhibit Features the Work of the NCC Archaeology Club

On January 11, the Mark Twain Library in Redding opened its exhibit "Redding: Founding of a Frontier Community 1714-2014". The exhibit was conceived, researched and produced by Dr. Stuart Reeve and Ms. Kathleen von Jena, Redding Town Historian and a graduate of the NCC Archaeology as an Avocation Program.

In a series of panels and objects, the exhibit chronicles the early history of Redding, focusing on two of Redding's most important early figures, John Read, the "Father of American Law", and Chickens Warrups, an influential Native American, and their descendants. In the exhibit,

many interesting aspects of their lives are touched on, including the possibility that John Read (after whom Redding was named) was America's first archaeologist!

The work of NCC students and Archaeology Club members at the Gallows Hill site is given a special place in the exhibit, as the artifacts recovered from a cellar hole are possibly connected to both the Chickens and Read families. Some of the materials, such as a glass trade bead and a possible metal "sash buckle", hint at a Native American identity as the occupant of the dwelling. Negative evidence in the form of the lack of a well, privy and well-defined midden (features usually associated with 18th century Euro-American farmsteads in the Northeast) provide additional support for this hypothesis.



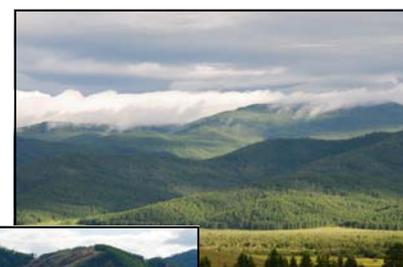
Ernie Weigand, NCC Professor, Kathleen von Jena, Redding Town Historian and Stuart Reeve in front of the exhibit of excavated artifacts.

The exhibit was funded by the Town of Redding in cooperation with the Mark Twain Library and the Redding Historical Society and will run through February 22, 2014. Exhibits were provided by the Redding Historical Society, Geordie Elkins and Jeb Stevens of Highstead, Susanna Hill, Scott and Jennifer Estabrook and Ernie Wiegand and the NCC Archaeology Club.

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Khirigsuurs in Mongolia

speculate them being ceremonial sites. Jargan suggests that they have more practical use such as landmarks or some sort of visual objects for organizing the landscape. He relates khirigsuurs with the adoption of new economy: from hunter-gathering into mobile pastoralism. We still don't know when this economic shift happened and his research is trying to figure this out. It is not known if the beginning of monumental constructions was related to this economic change, and by studying both the monuments and early camp sites (the latter of which are also something new in Mongolian archaeology) more is hoped to be learned. Please join us Thursday, March 13 in Room E-229 East Campus, 7:30 refreshments, and 8:00 lecture.



Landscapes above and above left, Site survey, below



Habitation Site testing, top, Road to Tarvatagai, above



Olivia Vlahos, Archaeology Program Founder and Matriarch Celebrates Birthday!

In January, Olivia Vlahos celebrated her 90th birthday with her family and friends at a very special gathering at the Red Barn in Westport. Olivia, the originator, founder and guiding force behind the NCC Archaeology Club and the Archaeology as an Avocation certificate program, was surprised to find her close friends “lying in wait” as she entered the restaurant with son Michael, daughter-in-law Kelley and their children, Ian and Morea. After a rousing “Happy Birthday Olivia!” the evening unfolded with several toasts, greetings between friends old and new and the telling of wonderful, wonderful stories.

Long-time club members and students will remember Olivia’s classes, filled not only with fascinating information about far-away peoples and far-off times, but with drama and action, that bespoke her earlier work in theatre. Married to the Emmy Award winning scriptwriter John Vlahos, her greatest productions were her children, Michael, Melissa and Stephanie, all of whom have gone on to their own professional careers. While pursuing her Master’s degree at Sarah Lawrence College, Olivia took many courses in anthropology, counting as one of her most important influences Joseph Campbell, the famous mythologist best known for his interviews with Bill Moyers that aired as “The Power of Myth”.

At Norwalk Community College, Olivia not only developed a number of classes in anthropology and sociology, but in response to students’ requests to take part in an archaeological “dig”, organized the NCC Archaeology Club. The interest



Olivia with her son Michael, and grandchildren Ian and Morea



among the club members for more courses in archaeology led to her successful grant proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities to create the “Archaeology as an Avocation” certificate program in 1974. The program offered its first courses in 1975, and, along with the Archaeology Club, has been an important part of Norwalk Community College ever since. The program has trained hundreds of avocational archaeologists (some who have gone on to graduate school and professional careers in the field) and has been a major educational and research resource to Fairfield County citizens, private and public institutions and local governments.



In April 2001, the Olivia Vlahos Scholarship was inaugurated at a gala dinner honoring Olivia and her contributions to her students, her college and her community. The initial scholarship was awarded to Gerry Sawyer, then a graduate student who has gone on to become a leading scholar of the archaeology of the African Diaspora.

Her interest in anthropology led to the writing of several books dealing with human evolution, prehistory and culture: *Human Beginnings*, *African Beginnings*, *New World Beginnings*, *Far Eastern Beginnings*, *The Battle Ax People*, *Doing Business and Body: the Ultimate Symbol*. Interested club members will be happy to know that all of her books may be found through the Internet at a variety of on-line sources – if you’ve never taken a course with Professor Vlahos, this is the next best thing! Join us in wishing Olivia a very happy birthday, with many more to come!



Olivia with NCC Professor Mary Francis Carmel, right and with Ken Bernard, left, former State Representative for Westport.



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Neal Konstantin Bree Longcore

February Film Night! - February 13th Easter Island

Our traditional February movie night will bring us to “the loneliest place on earth” – Easter Island. Since its discovery in the early 1700’s by a Dutch fleet that was blown off-course, the island has captured the fascination of the entire world. Who were these people? Why (and how?) did they erect the giant statues for which the island is most famously known? What can be learned about, and from, its history?



“Easter Island – from Paradise to Calamity” tells the story of the history of the island’s inhabitants from its initial settling through its ascendancy as the apex of artistic expression of ancient Polynesia to its civil war, collapse and subsequent cultural rebirth to its first contacts with the outside world – a world not believed to exist by the Easter Islanders. A variety of Easter Island specialists address these matters through history, archaeology, bioanthropology and cultural ecology to bring us up-to-date on this still-mysterious place.

The story also highlights the fragility of the island’s environment and the consequences of the misuse of its resources by man. As such, it holds many lessons for the rest of the world. Come join us for this exciting and most informative presentation! The meeting will be held in the East Campus GenRe Forum on Thursday, February 13 at 8 pm., with refreshments at 7:30 pm. Please call Ernie Wiegand at 203 857-7377 for further information.



Spring Dig at Gallows Hill Site

The Gallows Hill dig will continue this spring. Work on excavation block “G” will be completed and a series of shovel test pits will be excavated extending from the known boundaries of the site outward. This will provide information on the site’s precise size and boundaries, and will hopefully provide additional areas that may be further explored. Some of the shovel tests will be made in areas a short distance from the historic (and probably Native American) cellar hole that was the focus of our work for several years. We hope to find additional evidence of this historic occupation of the site that will contribute to the testing of the hypothesis that the site was indeed the home to a Native American (see the article on the exhibit “Redding: Founding of a Frontier Community 1714-2014”).

Artifacts from Gallows Hill, both historic and prehistoric, continue to be studied in the lab. Club members are encouraged to participate in this important work. No previous experience is needed – we will provide the tools and instructions! The lab sessions are held in room W-015, which is located in the basement under the IT wing Atrium in the West Campus. Call Ernie Wiegand at the Archaeology office for further information about the dig and lab sessions (203 857-7377).

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Human Sacrifice in Early Shang China

endemic in human history. The field of bioarchaeology is particularly well-suited for studying ancient human sacrifice, with its emphasis on cultural context and biological anthropology’s analysis of skeletal remains, including at the population level.

The Shang Dynasty (ca. 1600 – 1050 BCE) saw the height of human sacrifice in China, with thousands of individuals sacrificed in a variety of ways. Inscriptions on cattle scapulae and turtle plastrons related to divination recount the recipients and purpose of sacrifice. These inscriptions list counts of victims, possibly their geographical origin, along with descriptions of sacrifice along with pictographic representation of the act.

Analyzing the skeletal remains is a growing avenue of research which can illuminate aspects of the sacrificial victims’ lives – health, diet, activity patterns, disease, etc – that would otherwise be inaccessible to researchers. The study of human sacrifice from a bioarchaeological approach is currently practiced widespread in locations such as North America, the Andes, Mesoamerica, and Europe. My dissertation work will apply methodology utilized in these areas to study sacrificial victims in China’s Late Shang Dynasty (ca. 1250 – 1050 BCE). These analyses will then be integrated with textual sources and mortuary studies to help understand the relationship between human sacrifice and larger cultural, socio-political, and ritual practices.

Please join us April 10th in the Culinary Arts Dining Room, West Campus, refreshments at 7:30 pm, lecture at 8:00 pm.