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# Gender in 17th Century Southern New England

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# Gender in 17<sup>th</sup> Century Southern New England

Megan Willison

B.Phil, University of Pittsburgh, 2013

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

At the

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# APPROVAL PAGE

Masters of Arts Thesis

## Gender in 17<sup>th</sup> Century Southern New England

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2: TWO-SPIRITS OR CHANGING GENDER ROLES?</b>	<b>5</b>
Introduction	5
Studying Gender in the Mortuary Record	9
Gender Systems in the Northeast	14
Burial Practices	25
Site Background and Methodology	30
Outlier Burials & Explanations	34
Conclusions	40
<b>CHAPTER 3: NATIVE MASCULINITIES, SYSTEMS OF WARFARE, AND ADORNMENT</b>	<b>42</b>
Introduction	42
Theoretical Concepts	46
Early Uses of Native Copper	49
European Trade, Metal Production, and Exchange	53
Native Use of European Technology	55
Metallic Scrap from Three Archaeological Contexts	57
Native Masculinities & the Warrior's Use of Copper	66
Conclusions	70
<b>CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>APPENDIX A</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>APPENDIX B</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>79</b>

## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

### TABLES

<b>Table 1:</b> Grave good categories by age.	<b>23</b>
<b>Table 2:</b> Grave good categories by sex.	<b>33</b>
<b>Table 3:</b> Thickness and count of cuprous and ferrous artifacts.	<b>64</b>
<b>Table 4:</b> Metallic artifact assemblage proportions.	<b>64</b>

### FIGURES

<b>Figure 1:</b> Map of Native American territories in Connecticut circa 1625.	<b>43</b>
<b>Figure 2:</b> Cuprous projectile and conical points.	<b>61</b>
<b>Figure 3:</b> Assortment of metallic artifacts.	<b>61</b>
<b>Figure 4:</b> Cuprous scrap artifacts.	<b>62</b>
<b>Figure 5:</b> Cuprous bead.	<b>62</b>
<b>Figure 6:</b> Cuprous hair comb.	<b>63</b>

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

During the first half of the seventeenth century in southern New England, intensified efforts at European settlement led to drastic changes in Native American social, political, and economic structures. Epidemic diseases killed entire populations, rising tensions and a desire for land rights led to war and displacement, and missionization and trade altered indigenous social systems. Although portions of this history are well-known and were documented in the primary accounts written by Euroamerican traders and explorers, much was still left unrecorded or misrepresented. Gender, for example, is one topic that was disproportionately and ethnocentrically reported on by Euroamerican men. Women, both European and indigenous, were not consulted about their views, and their insight into their own culture and societal roles were not analyzed or understood. In addition to gender, war was another topic which, while reported widely upon, did not contain any indigenous perspectives, such as reasons an individual or group brought certain clothing items or objects into battle or preferred particular weapons over others. Although observers noted that native peoples were at war and commented on the typical gendered division of labor, the reasons behind the use of these social systems and the material items within them were not addressed or questioned.

This thesis, written in the form of two broadly related articles, aims to explore some of these gaps in the historical record and to address questions related to topics of gender, identity, cultural change and continuity, and the materiality of social institutions. Each article investigates how artifacts, as physical objects unintentionally or purposefully discarded, represent and reflect human behavior, societal ideologies, and cultural infrastructures. Using primary sources, archaeological evidence, and linguistic data, each article proposes that certain artifact classes are representative of larger societal ideals and cultural mores, such as gender systems and ways of



defining one's gender identity. Additionally, a major theme in both pieces concerns the changes in material culture and ways of life that occurred as a result of European contact. Contact between any two societies or groups invariably leads to some type of information and cultural exchange, diffusion, and/or acculturation. When Europeans arrived and began to settle along the coasts of North America, this contact and exchange of ideas, diseases, and material goods led to rapid changes in indigenous societies. These shifts in social institutions and ontologies are often reflected within the material record, both in domestic and mortuary contexts. Despite this evolving socioeconomic and political landscape, cultural continuity is also evident within the material assemblage. Thus while socio-cultural change was certainly occurring, material goods are also reflective of native attempts to preserve cultural attitudes and ideologies in the wake of newfound uncertainties.

The first article within this thesis argues that two-spirit individuals were culturally accepted persons within communities of the northeast, contrary to the dearth of historical information on two-spirit existence in this region. Two-spirits are found throughout North America, and, in fact, seem to be located in every region except the northeast. The widespread occurrence of this gender system suggests that the practice may have a long historical trajectory. These gender roles and structures, if existing in the northeast, likely originated prior to the seventeenth century. It is during the seventeenth century, however, that we may be better able and equipped to view this gender fluidity due to changes in mortuary traditions and rituals that occurred during the protohistoric and historic eras. These changes, which included increased visibility of burials through the use and creation of cemeteries (Brenner 1988), renewed focus on individuality as evidenced by the diversity and abundance of mortuary offerings (Crosby 1988), and the current preservation of these mortuary objects, all allow for an attempt to view gendered

grave goods as associated with sexed skeletal remains more so in the historic era than in preceding periods.

The mortuary study within the first article posits that two-spirit existence is one possible explanation for two apparently anomalous burial assemblages. Funerary objects from three seventeenth century burial grounds were statistically associated with biological sex categories to discern what, if any, burial items were related to the sex of an individual. A handful of material objects proved to be almost exclusively associated with either sex; what also appeared from this analysis, however, was the discovery of two burial assemblages that possessed a mixture of what are believed to be solely male or female burial goods. This article suggests that one explanation for these two burial contexts is the occurrence of nonbinary gender systems in seventeenth century southern New England. Additional explanations, such as changes in gender roles resultant from European cultural contact and acculturation, are also offered.

The second article argues that metallic cuprous (copper and brass), lead, and iron items recovered from three archaeological contexts dating to the Pequot War (1636-1637), two domestic villages and one military-related battle retreat route, reflect and represent native gender identity and spirituality. Metal, and specifically cuprous materials such as brass, bronze and copper, were imbued with spiritually-charged meanings to many indigenous communities prior to and concomitant with European contact. During periods of contact, cuprous and ferrous trade items are found in varying quantities within archaeological domestic assemblages. In many instances, indigenous individuals reprocessed, cut, chiseled, bent, or somehow physically reworked these trade items to create new forms and objects. When viewing the archaeological assemblage of a battlefield, the abundance of scrap and sheet metal carried and/or worn by native men appears noteworthy. This paper argues that native combatants carried these scrap and sheet

metal items, which currently seem to have no known uses as weapons or decorative objects, because these items represented and reaffirmed native male identity and indigenous cosmology.

Indigenous gender systems and identity within southern New England during this period remain a topic that deserves greater attention. This thesis will add to the existing literature on these aspects of indigenous culture and offer more information on that which was, and still is, little written about or recorded. This research has implications for broadening the scope of known non-binary gender structures in North America, understanding the role of metallic material mediums in crafting gender identity, and discerning further evidence of indigenous cultural change and perseverance in the seventeenth century.

## **CHAPTER 2: TWO-SPIRITS OR CHANGING GENDER ROLES? AN INVESTIGATION OF MORTUARY REMAINS IN SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Native American two-spirits are known throughout native North America via oral tradition, cosmology, ethnohistoric accounts, and the archaeological record (Callender and Kochems 1983; Carpenter 2011; Loren 2008; Roscoe 1998; Slater 2011). Two-spirit individuals, sometimes referred to in the past as berdaches, are biological males or females who exhibit some degree of gender variance, which is defined as “cultural constructions of multiple genders (i.e., more than two) and the opportunity for individuals to change gender roles and identities over the course of their lifetimes” (Jacobs and Cromwell 1992:63). For the purposes of this paper, individuals who may exhibit gender fluidity/variance will be referred to as two-spirits rather than berdaches, as the term berdache is today considered “an inappropriate and insulting term” by many Native American groups and anthropologists (Jacobs et al. 1997:3).

While the existence and cultural acceptance of two-spirit individuals are recorded in at least 155 tribes throughout North America (Roscoe 1998:7), including those within the Eastern Woodlands (Loren 2008:81) and within many Algonquian-speaking indigenous societies (Callender and Kochems 1983), there has yet been little to no documentary or archaeological evidence for two-spirit existence in northeastern North America. Walter Williams (1992) suggests that berdachism, or two-spirit existence, was most prominent in four regions of North America:

first, the Prairie and western Great Lakes, the northern and central Great Plains, and the lower Mississippi Valley; second, Florida and the Caribbean; third, the Southwest, the Great Basin, and California; and fourth, scattered areas of the Northwest, western Canada, and Alaska. For some reason it is not noticeable in eastern North America, with the exception of its southern rim. (4)

Callender and Kochems (1983) also write that recorded instances of this gender status and system is “scantiest for the Arctic, Subarctic, Plateau, and East” (445).

This absence of information suggests that the fluid gender roles available and respected in other native cultures may have been lacking in the northeast, that only a very small proportion of the population ascribed to this status, that the occurrence was not observed or reported in early European historical or oral documents, and/or that ethnographic observations occurred later in the northeast, by which time these societies who adhered to a gender fluid system had been largely decimated, displaced, and/or experienced shifts in cultural attitudes and beliefs. As a result, we currently lack the data to say with certainty that this gender system did or did not exist among the Algonquian-speaking, indigenous groups within the current analysis. This research explores this issue through the use of seventeenth century Native American mortuary contexts in southern New England and posits that two-spirit individuals may be present within this geographic locale.

The impetus for this discussion on two-spirit existence in the northeast stemmed from a statistical analysis of three seventeenth century Native cemeteries, the Narragansett West Ferry (1620-1640), Narragansett RI-1000 (1640-1670), and Mashantucket Pequot Long Pond sites (1670-1685), which were studied to discern if certain funerary objects correlated with biological sex categories. The West Ferry site is located in Jamestown, Rhode Island. William Simmons excavated this site in the 1960s and uncovered and recorded 58 historic historic-period burials (Simmons 1970:64). The second site, RI-1000, is located in South Kingston, Rhode Island and was excavated between 1982 and 1983. Archaeologists removed and documented approximately 50 graves prior to a construction project (Nassaney 2000; Robinson 1990; Rubertone 2001; Turnbaugh 1984; Welters et. al. 1996). The third archaeological site, Long Pond, is located

adjacent to the Mashantucket Pequot Reservation on former reservation lands and was discovered during the excavation of a house foundation in 1990. Archaeologists excavated twenty-eight graves along the edge of the unfinished foundation; an additional 35 graves were estimated to have been destroyed during excavation of this foundation (McBride 2008; Welters et. al. 1996). Although the author had access to mortuary remains data from multiple seventeenth century cemeteries, only the three previously mentioned were chosen for statistical analysis as they possessed adequate sample sizes (i.e., at least twenty burials), included known and well-recorded excavation contexts, and contained skeletal material that was both complete and sexed at the time of excavation. Information concerning all of the cemeteries mentioned within this study were obtained from scholarly articles, site reports, and/or information compiled by Kevin McBride and the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center (McBride, personal communication, May 24, 2016; McBride 2008; Nassaney 2000; Robinson 1990; Rubertone 2001; Simmons 1970; Turnbaugh 1984; Welters et. al. 1996).

Following a statistical analysis relating the funerary objects from these three cemeteries to individually interred, biologically sexed individuals, the author extrapolated the results to other known mortuary contexts to determine if any burials identified to sex from other cemeteries, such as those at Apponaug, RI; Burr's Hill, RI; Fall River, MA; Ipswich, MA; Marblehead, MA; North Middleboro, MA; Titicut, MA; Tiverton, RI; Westerly, RI; and Winthrop, RI, contained funerary objects strongly associated with both male and female categories. A Native burial ground located in Marblehead, Massachusetts, was one such cemetery where sample size did not lend itself to statistical analysis. Nonetheless, the cemetery did contain one burial of a biological female associated with both male and female gendered funerary objects. This data is therefore included in the current analysis as representative of a

possible two-spirit individual. A second burial of a biological male from the Narragansett cemetery RI-1000 was also found to be associated with both male and female mortuary offerings. While this study does not presume that these seemingly ambiguous burials definitively represent two-spirited individuals in southern New England, their assemblage suggests that if not two-spirited individuals, these mortuary offerings may be demonstrative of the cultural changes, including changes in gender roles, which resulted from European contact and trade. Although there exists no known cemetery and funerary data in the region to test this hypothesis (i.e., no known Late Woodland burial assemblages to compare with post-contact assemblages), various scholars have noted shifts in the gendered use of certain objects, such as smoking pipes, resultant from the effects of European contact (Nassaney 2000; Nassaney and Volmar 2003). Thus this explanation is provided as a possible alternative based upon the work of changing gendered material culture of the time period.

While the burials and associated funerary objects provide a great deal of information on Native mortuary ritual, the historic record associated with these objects is also an invaluable resource for understanding how people lived and interacted with certain material objects in the past. Therefore, prior to analyzing the mortuary data from these aforementioned cemeteries, the author studied a variety of primary sources to identify the potential gender roles and activities of particular indigenous tribes within contact-period southern New England; this information, in turn, provided correlates between funerary objects and biological sex categories. Although English primary sources have an inherent cultural bias, their descriptions of native culture “are usually indispensable and often trustworthy” and can yield a great deal of information about native and European society (Axtell 1997:15). The ethnohistoric record associated with the Narragansett and Pequot was also examined to gain insight into how both tribal nations

conceptualized their mortuary rituals and how their cultural practices influenced the burial and treatment of the dead.

This essay will first explore the advantages and disadvantages of studying gender through the mortuary record. Historical accounts will then be investigated to understand how mortuary practices may have influenced burial proceedings and to make inferences regarding the gendered division of economic tasks for Pequot and Narragansett societies. The essay will then evaluate how certain funerary objects from the three cemeteries are statistically associated with biological sex categories to extrapolate differences in the gendered division of labor and the existence of nonbinary gender systems. Lastly, this analysis will determine if two-spirited individuals were members of these societies based upon the mortuary context and associations of gendered items with male and female remains. Alternative explanations for these funerary remains will also be provided.

## **STUDYING GENDER IN THE MORTUARY RECORD**

Gender is an important focal point in mortuary studies because it can illuminate much about those aspects of a society for which little has been recorded or about certain individuals or groups that have been marginalized and not intensively studied. Mortuary studies can also provide information about a past that has been erased and/or filtered through the lens and historiography constructed by Euromerican male explorers and settlers. Before any analysis of this topic can commence, however, it is important to note the advantages and disadvantages of using mortuary studies as a method for understanding gender relations inferred from colonial settings.

To begin, it is imperative to define what is meant by the terms gender and sex. For the purposes of this paper, sex is biologically determined whereas gender is culturally defined.



Some posit, however, that this difference is not so easily dichotomous, as the category of sex itself, which people assume to be ‘natural,’ is also a product of society and may be considered a gendered category (Butler 1999:11). Akin to sex, gender is a term which can transcend binary categorization. Culturally constituted gender is a concept that permeates all aspects of life and is molded by assigning differences based on traits, actions, and roles (Hendon 1997; O’Gorman 2001); it is best understood, “as something that develops through particular practices engaged in by individual actors and evaluated differently in different cultures or cultural settings” (Claassen and Joyce 1997:4). Gender can have different connotations dependent upon spatial and temporal factors (Conkey and Spector 1984), and it can also be both an internalized and a societally-based attribute and identity marker. Gender is re-enacted through the roles one has in a society, and those roles and the associations with them are manipulated by societal ideologies concerning what is constituted as appropriate or morally correct. As Simone de Beauvoir (2010) famously wrote, “One is not born, but rather becomes, woman” (283). One’s gender and identity are not ascribed at birth, but are instead formulated by oneself and one’s family, peers, and acquaintances throughout the course of one’s life.

Sex and gender identity are thus social products mediated by the relations of production (Rubin 2011:166), which are the processes through which these identity markers are created and maintained. The construction and acceptance of sexualities, which can comprise part of one’s gender identification, is similarly a political issue imbued with power hierarchies and relations regulating not only the discourse and cultural mores of the past, but also the present (Foucault 1978). What is relevant for the current discussion is that sex and gender identification can be, and were, highly politicized, as the identification and description of two-spirit individuals was scorned by the European explorers who wrote about its occurrence (Callender and Kochems

1983; Jacobs et al. 1997; Roscose 1998). When there exists apparent inconsistencies or a lack of congruence in the historiography, archaeology can be one tool used to garner greater insight into the cultural and social values of past societies.

The field of mortuary studies is one avenue through which archaeologists can gain this insight into past gender systems. Although biological sex can be determined in mortuary studies based upon the degree of bone preservation and age of the individual, gender can be a more challenging cultural construct to disentangle. The way in which past studies of mortuary remains have progressed is to assign and determine a materiality to gender (Arnold 2006; Crass 2001; Crown and Fish 1996; Hanks 2008; Hollimon 2006; Nassaney and Volmar 2003; O’Gorman 2001; Sullivan 2001; Turnbaugh 1984; Weglian 2001; Whelan 1991), which is achieved by inferring statistical associations between grave goods and biological sex. Generally these studies have found that artifacts associated with adults vary but are generally related to quotidian tasks and the sexual division of labor (Crown and Fish 1996; O’Gorman 2001; Sullivan 2001; Turnbaugh 1984), which in turn can provide information about a society’s gender roles in conjunction with ethnographic and folkloric data (Crass 2001).

The grave goods or material remains used in these analyses, however, are not simply static objects that have stood the test of time and processes of taphonomy. Rather these artifacts represent a “flexible medium that is used both to create notions of traditions, the maintenance of conventions, and normative behavior, and as a means of defiance against and disrupting these same norms” (Sorenson 2006:105). These items are simultaneously individual objects and larger material representations of such processes as innovation, resistance, and persistence. These material remains can reinforce existing gender systems, roles, and ideologies, can represent long-standing traditions on the sexual division of labor and culturally-appropriate ways of acting and

being, or can be a physical manifestation of individual or collective revolution. Funerary objects not only represent gender, but aided and continue to aid in the (re)construction of it (Sørensen 2006).

By first assigning and associating burial remains with a given biological sex, one can begin to study how these material items were imbued with greater meaning. Although this approach is employed within the current study, there are potential biases and problematic aspects in the use of this methodology to infer information about past gender structures. A brief description of these biases, which include, for example, the deceased individual's inability to choose which objects are buried with him/herself to reflect individual gender identity, deserves note before going further in this analysis.

One of the first issues with using mortuary studies to infer and extrapolate information about gender systems relates to the process of death itself and the creation of identity. Death is considered to be a rite of passage into the next life in many societies, and, like all rites of passage, it is marked by a tripartite system of separation, liminality, and reincorporation or rebirth into a new role (Metcalf and Huntington 1991:29-33; van Gennep 2004). Death is not necessarily the final rite of passage that one undergoes, however, as the dead can again be reinitiated and integrated back among the living, either by the deceased's own accords or through the machinations of another (van Gennep 2004:219). Death is also a transition that relates not only to the afterlife, but "also to the process of living, aging, and producing progeny" (Metcalf and Huntington 1991:108), for once the individual has died it is up to the living, such as the deceased's offspring, to decide how best to process and commemorate the dead. An important part of this commemoration is determining which items should be buried with the deceased. This can lead to differential patterning of grave goods and the creation or re-evaluation of the

deceased's gender identity via "how the identity of the deceased is (re)articulated by the living through the mortuary event itself" (Hanks 2008:15). The deceased's identity can thus become a contested space during the process of mourning and internment as the living determine how and in what ways the dead should be remembered and what items they should take with them into the next life. These items, in turn, can hold differential meanings to those who place them in the grave and to the person being buried (Robinson 1990). What the archaeologist or mourning family members may find to be a typical female grave offering may have meant something different entirely to the deceased individual.

A second, related potential bias in this approach relates to the fluidity of gender identity within a given culture. In societies where gender roles are known to be fluid, burial rituals and their associated accoutrements will potentially only reveal the gender of the individual during the final stage of his/her life (Crass 2001; Hollimon 2006). If an individual were raised within a certain gender tradition during childhood but after a rite of passage and throughout the rest of his/her life is treated and performs tasks typical of another gender category, the burial record may only reflect the person's final gender identification. Thus the burial record does not necessarily provide one with a complete picture of an individual's life or gender conceptualizations.

Other potential disadvantages to using mortuary contexts as a source of gender identification include the fact that funerary offerings may offer a one-dimensional view of the past, as their context of use in a mortuary setting and burial ritual may differ widely from that in domestic, daily duties and tasks (Robinson 1990; Turnbaugh 1984). Additionally, those items that are found in funerary, or any archaeological, record are those that are relatively unperishable. Gender in some societies, both during life and death, is marked by perishable objects

such as clothing (Arnold 2006; Crass 2001). Although this is certainly a valid argument, there still exist many items which are not perishable and are evocative of gender structures, such as those used in the current analysis.

All of these reasons, in conjunction with the “incomplete preservation, replacement or exchange of goods by the society, and subsequent looting” (Crass 2001:115) can make gender or sex-specific associated objects difficult to contextualize and can lead to challenges in an interpretation of the living society and its cultural patterning. Still, Arnold (2006) suggests that “burial evidence remains one of the most evocative sources of information regarding past gender configurations available to us, and the inferential difficulty inherent in all mortuary analysis should not preclude its use in the interpretation of social systems in the past” (137). Mortuary remains can reveal information not only about an individual, but about overall societal gender fluidity, ethnic or kinship affiliations, and socioeconomic systems (Whelan 1991). The items of interment and the process of their burial are intentional acts (Nassaney 2000; Robinson 1990) meant to commemorate the dead in life and/or prepare the deceased for the afterlife.

In northeastern native societies where no known historic documents exist that mention the occurrence of nonbinary gender systems, mortuary studies remain one of the few, if only, avenues for exploring this social tradition. Through the analysis of mortuary remains from select burials, we can attempt to determine whether these mortuary offerings are representative of two-spirit individuals or if there are other possible explanations for the outlier grave good remains.

## **GENDER SYSTEMS IN THE NORTHEAST**

Before one can analyze grave good assemblages and undertake an analysis and discussion of two-spirit existence in the northeast, the literature on gender roles and ideologies within 17<sup>th</sup> century southern New England indigenous societies should be expounded upon. This

information on the gendered division of labor can provide further evidence concerning the types of materials one may expect to find with males and females in mortuary contexts.

Contextualizing descriptions of gender and gender roles in the ethnohistoric record are often clouded by the cultural biases of the white, European males who recorded their interactions and exchanges with indigenous populations. One such example of these clouded perceptions regards subsistence strategies, wherein native men were viewed as lazy (Gookin 1792:9; Wood 1764:14,93) because they hunted, fished, and left the arduous work of agriculture and the relocation of domestic houses to native women. One observer described indigenous women as industrious and akin to slaves for all the work they were required to do (Wood 1764:72,93), as shown by the notation that women were “more loving, pitiful, and modest, mild, provident, and laborious than their lazy husbands” (Wood 1764:118). In European society, hunting was viewed solely as a leisurely activity, whereas “Agricultural labor in England was men’s work [. . .]. It was considered demeaning and unjust to expect women to work in fields as part of their regular duties” (Kupperman 2000:148-9). By participating in the part-time activity of hunting and subjecting the womenfolk to the brunt of a full-time horticultural workload, European males viewed their indigenous counterparts as idle and lackadaisical. In spite of these biases, European chroniclers of native societies often remarked upon the gendered division of labor and how certain items were more associated with one sex than the other.

Women, for example, had a variety of important responsibilities and economic duties aside from those associated with the production and preparation of food. According to William Wood (1764), women built wigwams (118); caught lobsters as bait for their husbands (119); made mats “and hemp and rushes, with dying fluff, of which they make curious baskets, with intermixed colours and pourtraitures of antique imagery” (120); and “They likewise sew their

husbands shoes, and weave coats of turkey feathers, besides all their ordinary household drudgery which daily lies upon them” (Wood 1764:120). Women, in addition to making clothing items, also were responsible for washing clothes (Wood 1764:77), weaving and creating blankets (Gookin 1792:11), and making pots (Bragdon 1997:115). Gookin (1792) posited that men made wooden dishes, pots, and utensils (11), which were used in conjunction with clay pottery or, depending upon the time period, European trade kettles.

Adult women could also be sachems and powwows (Bragdon 1997:178), although generally these roles would have been filled by men. Gookin (1792), when writing of male and female powwows, described them and their roles as: “These are partly wizards and witches, holding familiarity with Satan, that evil one; and partly are physicians, and make use, at least in show, of herbs and roots, for curing the sick and diseased” (14); it seems from this observation that, in addition to having the potential to become spiritual leaders, women could also assume the role of healers. Women thus held a multitude of roles within southern New England culture.

While adult women performed most of the horticultural work, men cleared the land and planted their own tobacco. Roger Williams (1643) noted men’s association with tobacco when he wrote, “They generally all take *Tobacco*; and it is commonly the only plant which men labour in; the women managing all the rest” (14). Tobacco was not only associated with the male sex, but with adult males in particular. For example, “The men take much tobacco, but for boys so to do they account it odious” (Winslow 2014:109). Some tasks, in addition to being segregated by sex were also separated by age.

In addition to planting tobacco, men fished, hunted, and “created the bulk of (surviving) tools, including those such as pestles, used by women. Men were carvers as well, famed for delicate bowls and spoons made of burl wood, often (at least in the early historic period)

adorned with naturalistic carvings of animals” (Bragdon 1997:118). Men also participated in warfare and trading activities which would take them away from the villages during certain periods of the year.

One specific task that appears to have fluctuated over time, geographic region, and other variables, is the production of wampum. “Information from European observers about wampum manufacture suggests that both men and women made wampum beads. However, it appears that the beads had their greatest significance when woven into belts, which was apparently the work of women” (Bragdon 1997:112), and when produced by high-ranking women, such belts helped in validating “their families’ right to rule and as the media of diplomatic exchange” (Bragdon 1996:577). Crosby (1988) posits, however, that wampum manufacture was the labor of men (186). The mortuary data analyzed in the current study found that both genders were involved in the manufacture of wampum as wampum drills are found in almost equal proportions of male and female burials. Despite scholarly disagreement over whether men or women produced this shell currency, the use of wampum and its purpose as a payment of dowry in bridal negotiations and as a tool for peace-keeping given from one sachem to another cannot be disputed (Williams 1643; Wood 1764). In these contexts, it was given by men to other men, and thus could be considered a form of male power and prestige; it could, however, also be worn by any person of high status, including women (Price 1996; Williams 1643:149). If wampum was predominantly utilized by men for trade, diplomacy, and exchange of wealth, and was in turn at least partially crafted by women, men’s power and prestige could be stated to then be dependent upon women’s labor. Women, as in other societies such as the Trobriand Islands (Weiner 1980) and Tonga (Gailey 1980, 1987), created labor- and time-intensive valuable items, such as valued cloth or skirts, or in this instance wampum beads, which in turn assisted in the creation and maintenance



of male political power and wealth. Although both sexes may have participated in its creation, men clearly reaped many of its benefits.

Since the societies under consideration in this paper were divided by the sexual division of labor described above, one would expect women and men to have been buried with different implements according to their sex and/or gender identification. Women presumably would be found with items such as hoes, pestles, kettles and containers whereas men would be buried with smoking pipes and the tools needed for hunting, fishing or warfare, such as axes, knives, and bows and arrows. Men would also likely be associated with weapons, such as gun parts, although the amount of such items found in the mortuary record can relate directly to the politics of the era, such as the ban on selling ammunition and arms to Native Americans (Bradford 1968, Vol. 2:44-5). These associations, such as women with pestles and hoes and men with pipes and knives, have been validated in a number of mortuary studies which found certain objects to be associated with a given sex (Crown and Fish 1996; Crosby 1988; Nassaney 2002; Nassaney and Volmar 2003; Simmons 1970; Turnbaugh 1984). Items outside of this dichotomy of sex could indicate an object that is gender neutral, indicative of differential status, or a marker of age.

Age, as a classification system and as a means of determining funerary remains, is closely tied to the gender identification of an individual. Age, along with gender, “formed the basis for the division of labor among the natives of southeastern New England” (Nassaney and Volmar 2003:79). Age can be a powerful means of distinguishing individuals both during life and in death, and it is important in the consideration and analysis of gender systems because as one ages, the gender roles and mortuary objects associated with that individual would change as well. Age is also correlated with status in many societies, where the older a person becomes, the more responsibilities he/she is given. A brief discussion of age-related status, responsibilities, and

mortuary offerings from the three cemeteries will be mentioned to better conceptualize, with the aid of linguistics, both how age and gender are intimately connected topics of inquiry and how linguistics, age, and gender data can strengthen claims to nonbinary gender structures.

Children, or all those who had yet to undergo a rite of passage into adult status, were buried with remains typical of the special place they held within indigenous society. Simmons (1970) notes that children were akin to birds in that they were mysterious and held an indeterminate stage of being. “Like crows, children were not entirely committed to the living, and they may have been considered as ambiguously poised between two worlds” (Simmons 1970:62). McBride (2008) notes that children between the ages of three and eleven generally formed a distinct group, as they had survived infancy but were not yet fully fledged members within their community. “Although older children (between three and eleven years) may have had a firmer existence in the physical world, they had not yet achieved the status, knowledge, and power to travel unassisted from the physical world to the spirit world” (McBride 2008:136). Neonatals were also in need of being anchored to one world or the other, as evidenced by their typically being buried with bracelets or anklets in order to symbolically tie them to the earth (McBride 2008). This information all suggests that children might be more likely to have ritualized objects or bracelets associated with their burials and would not have the tools normally given to adult men and women in the community. Older individuals, conversely, did not require the highly ritualized objects and ornaments needed to pass from one stage to the next and would be hypothesized to be found with more artifacts suggestive of their roles and responsibilities within society.

Mortuary offerings can thus reveal if one had recently undergone a change in status from a child to an adult based upon the types of grave goods recovered. At a given age, generally

around the onset of puberty, children attain the status of adults when they undergo a rite of passage. While very little is recorded about indigenous rites of passage, and especially female rites of passage (Simmons 1986), it is known that certain signifiers, such as changes in ornamentation, hairstyle, clothing, and economic tasks, were indicators of a shift in status, and therefore that someone had gone through the ritual. Hair style, for example, was at least one marker of age and of a newly given position within society. Particular hair styles could only be worn by certain persons during specific stages of their life (Axtell 1981; Bragdon 1997; Finch 2010; Kupperman 1980; Wroth 1970:138). Wood (1764) noted, for instance, that “[. . .] their [Aberginians or northward Indians] boys being not permitted to wear their hair long until sixteen years of age, and then they must come to it by degrees” (75). Hair style signaled an individual’s age and life accomplishments and therefore the tasks and responsibilities one would have within his/her culture. While organic matter, such as hair, would not preserve within the archaeological record, it does appear that certain artifact classes correlate with age categories within the three cemeteries studied in this paper.

A brief description of the relationship between funerary goods and age categories, of which there are five as chosen by the author (neonatal and young toddler, children from three to twelve, adults from thirteen to thirty, adults from thirty to fifty, and adults over fifty), will aid in demonstrating some of these aforementioned trends. All age data given was taken from the three cemeteries where statistical analysis tests were performed (Long Pond, RI-1000, and West Ferry). Within each age category, percentages will be presented to demonstrate which artifacts are most likely to be recovered within that age bracket. Percentages listed in the following paragraphs were found by dividing the number of burials with a given object for an age range by the total number of burials for that age unit. The overall total number of burials (n=120) was not

utilized in an attempt to limit the effects of skewing based upon one age category having more burials than another. Frequencies for all five age categories are listed in **Table 1**.

Neonatal and young toddlers (n=12), within the three cemeteries, or all those under three years of age, have proportionally the highest percentage of spoons (33%), aboriginal pottery (25%), iron nails (17%), iron tools (25%), matting or some other type of organic textile (25%), iron cup or container fragments (17%), copper coins or medallions (8%), and wampum beads (8%) of any age category. As a brief reminder and as an example, for the spoons category, this translates into one-third of the twelve total neonatal and young toddler burials possessing at least one spoon or spoon fragment. None of the twelve neonatal and young toddlers from the three cemeteries were buried with metal kettles, weapons, pipes, glass beads, necklaces, pestles, iron wampum drills, iron hooks, iron scissors, iron hoes, headbands, buttons, whetstones, breastplates, or brass hawk bells.

Children, or subadults ranging in age from three to twelve (n=29), possessed the highest percentage of shell beads (34%), glass beads (24%), necklaces (31%), and headbands (14%) as funerary offerings when compared to other age brackets. This group was the only one to be found with brass hawk bells (14%). Breastplates, whetstones, iron wampum drills, pipes and metal kettles were absent from this age range. This group had the second largest percentage of aboriginal pottery after the neonatal and young toddlers (17%) and the second largest proportion of iron hoes, after the people above the age of fifty (10%). Children were also, aside from the neonatal and young toddler age group, the only other grouping to have copper coins or medallions (3%).

From this brief overview, it would appear that children who presumably had not yet undergone initiation into adulthood within the society were not only given valuable objects, such

as glass and wampum beads, but were also excluded from being buried with objects that they had not yet used or had access to within their daily lives, such as pipes, wampum drills, and implements of war. One exception to this trend, however, is that neonatals and young toddlers can be found with iron tools such as knives, axes, and/or chisels in their burial assemblages. Additionally, three subadults possessed iron hoes, an item typically associated exclusively with adult female horticultural tasks. Their inclusion in a handful of subadult (ages three to twelve) burials could be suggestive of the accumulation of greater responsibilities prior to death or the need for such an object in the next life if the child was on the cusp or had just become an adult member of the community via a rite of passage. It is also possible that these tools of the trade were imbued with greater spiritual associations or meanings and may have helped young children pass onto the next life.

The middle age range consisted of adults aged thirteen to thirty (n=34). This age group had the highest proportion of rings (24%), bottles (24%), metal kettles (18%), iron scissors (12%), brass/copper beads and scrap metal (32%), buttons (9%), and breastplates (6%). Absent from the assemblage of this age range were such objects as wampum beads, brass hawk bells, and copper coins. The next age group, individuals between thirty to fifty years of age (n=28), possessed the highest proportion of smoking pipes (14%). Individuals in this age range were not buried with objects such as brass hawk bells, buttons, copper coins, necklaces, or bottles.

The last age group, individuals over fifty (n=17), were associated with the highest proportions of weapons (24%), pestles (6%), iron wampum drills (12%), iron hooks (12%), iron hoes (24%), and whetstones (12%). No individuals in this age range were buried with brass hawk bells, breastplates, iron cups, buttons, headbands, copper coins, iron scissors, aboriginal pottery, necklaces, bottles, or rings. From these ratios, one can infer that upon reaching

adulthood, and especially old age, individuals were more likely to be buried with objects associated with their role(s) and status within indigenous society.

	NEONATAL & TODDLER AGES 0-3 (N = 12)	SUBADULT AGES 3-12 (N = 29)	ADULT AGES 12- 30 (N = 34)	ADULT AGES 30-50 (N = 28)	ADULT AGES 50+ (N = 17)
ARTIFACT GROUPS					
<i>Rings</i>	8.33%	6.90%	23.53%	7.14%	0.00%
<i>Bottles</i>	8.33%	10.34%	23.53%	0.00%	0.00%
<i>Spoon</i>	33.33%	31.03%	32.35%	10.71%	5.88%
<i>Shell Beads/Pendants/Earrings</i>	16.67%	34.48%	26.47%	3.57%	11.76%
<i>Ritualized object</i>	0.00%	6.90%	5.88%	0.00%	0.00%
<i>Metal Kettle/Skillet/Measuring Vessel</i>	0.00%	0.00%	17.65%	7.14%	11.76%
<i>Weapon</i>	0.00%	0.00%	5.88%	7.14%	23.53%
<i>Pipe</i>	0.00%	0.00%	5.88%	14.29%	5.88%
<i>Glass Beads</i>	0.00%	24.14%	23.53%	7.14%	5.88%
<i>Necklace/Bracelet</i>	0.00%	31.03%	23.53%	0.00%	0.00%
<i>Aboriginal Pottery</i>	25.00%	17.24%	5.88%	7.14%	0.00%
<i>Pestle</i>	0.00%	3.45%	2.94%	3.57%	5.88%
<i>Iron Nails or Fragments</i>	16.67%	6.90%	14.71%	7.14%	5.88%
<i>Iron Knife/Axe/Chisel</i>	25.00%	13.79%	20.59%	14.29%	11.76%
<i>Iron Wampum Drills &amp; Awls</i>	0.00%	0.00%	2.94%	3.57%	11.76%
<i>Iron Hooks/Keys/Chains/Locks</i>	0.00%	3.45%	2.94%	3.57%	11.76%
<i>Iron Scissors &amp; Rods</i>	0.00%	10.34%	11.76%	7.14%	0.00%
<i>Matting/Organic Material</i>	25.00%	10.34%	17.65%	14.29%	17.65%
<i>Brass/Copper Beads &amp; Scraps</i>	16.67%	20.69%	32.35%	21.43%	11.76%
<i>Copper Coin or Medallion</i>	8.33%	3.45%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<i>Iron Hoe</i>	0.00%	10.34%	2.94%	7.14%	23.53%
<i>Headband</i>	0.00%	13.79%	8.82%	3.57%	0.00%
<i>Button</i>	0.00%	6.90%	8.82%	0.00%	0.00%
<i>Iron Cup or Container Fragments</i>	16.67%	6.90%	11.76%	7.14%	0.00%
<i>Whetstone or Abrader</i>	0.00%	0.00%	2.94%	3.57%	11.76%
<i>Breastplate</i>	0.00%	0.00%	5.88%	3.57%	0.00%
<i>Brass Hawk's Bells</i>	0.00%	13.79%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<i>Wampum/Wampum Belt</i>	8.33%	3.45%	0.00%	3.57%	5.88%

Table 1. Select grave good categories by age for the three cemeteries under study.

Using this data and shifting back to the main discussion on gender and the existence of nonbinary gender systems, the apparent lack of strict gender identifications associated with children and their mortuary assemblage supports the notion that gender was not something ascribed at birth but achieved through the completion of certain acts, through performance of gender preference, and/or through certain physical signifiers of maturation. This hypothesis, that Algonquian gender identity is achieved rather than ascribed, can be supported with linguistic data. In the Algonquian languages, under whose large linguistic umbrella both the Narragansett and Mohegan/Pequot belong, there is no gender category as there exists in Indo-European languages. In lieu of a masculine, feminine, and gender neutral lexicon, Algonquian speakers possess a language system that describes words as either animate or inanimate; thus, while someone with a Western background and mindset may consciously or unconsciously associate given objects or gender categories as self-evident, Algonquian speakers, such as the Blackfoot, view “sexual gender classification [ . . . ] not as necessary or natural but as arbitrary” (Smith 1999:41). This leads Algonquian speech to not focus “on explicit structural distinctions between women and men” (Bragdon 1996:586). Additionally, in some Algonquian cultural groups, such as the Ojibwe, there exists a “degree of fluidity” among animate and inanimate categories dependent upon the object’s perceived “behavior in the world” (Smith 1999:42). Smith (1999) argues that “The same holds true in regard to the behavior of humans. While humans are always understood as animate, the sex-gendered roles of women and men exhibit a fluidity of form and content; once again, experience is the determinative factor” (Smith 1999:42). If one supports the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that language shapes thought and ways of viewing and experiencing the world (Kottak 2015:260), then the Algonquian language can be viewed as one that permits for a worldview that is ungendered, unbiased, and open to nonbinary gender systems.

## BURIAL PRACTICES

As the material correlates for this study will be taken from mortuary contexts, it is also important to understand, before the statistical analysis may commence, how the native communities of southern New England conceptualized death and how they chose to bury their dead. Death for the inhabitants of southern New England, as for most societies, was an important religious and social event where a person's essence or soul traveled onto the next life. Once a person died, the house of the deceased was often taken down and the inhabitants of the deceased would "live here and there a while with Friends, to allay their excessive Sorrowes" (Williams 1643:4). The deceased person was then "laid in [a] Grave, and sometimes (in some parts some goods cast in with them). They have then a second great lamentation and upon the Grave is spread the Mat that the party died on, the Dish he eat in; and sometimes a faire Coat of skin hung upon the next tree to the Grave, which none will touch, but suffer it there to rot with the dead" (Williams 1643:195).

Winslow (1865) also recorded finding mats in mortuary contexts when the Pilgrims landed on Cape Cod before settling Plymouth. A group of men, upon anchoring offshore, traveled inland to gain an understanding of the local landscape and to locate native peoples. During one of their expeditions they came upon a native burial. Winslow (1865) recorded that they "found a little path to certaine heapes of sand, one whereof was covered with old Matts, and had a wooden thing like a mortar whelmed on the top of it, and an earthen pot layd in a little hole at the end thereof; we musing what it might be, digged & found a Bow, and, as we thought, Arrowes, but they were rotten" (19). Bragdon (1997) and Simmons (1970) believe that the bodies were wrapped in mats because "mats emphasized social differences and marked ritual occasions" (Bragdon 1997:114). This is also supported in the historical documents when



Winslow (2014) wrote that although all individuals were buried in at least one mat, “If the party be a Sachim they cover him with many curious mats, and bury all his riches with him, and enclose the grave with a pale” (108). Status, in addition to age and gender, determined the types and amounts of grave goods associated with one during death.

Winslow (1865) also found planks or boards in a mortuary context when he happened upon a burial that seemed to have been, based upon the hair attached to the skull, belonging to a blond European buried in indigenous fashion (32-4). These wooden boards, if found around the burial to form a type of chest or coffin, are supposedly representative of a noble or high-status deceased person (Morton 1883:169-170). There is not an overabundance of mats or any boards or planks recovered at the three burial grounds under study, however, as organic materials do not preserve well within the archaeological record.

Once a person died and was placed within his/her mat, mourners lowered the deceased into a circular grave and oriented the top of his/her head and the long axis of the individual’s spine towards the southwest. The directional orientation of burials is important because it highlights the cosmological views of Algonquian-speaking societies, who held that one of their deities resided in the southwestern direction. While there were multiple otherworldly beings that controlled parts of the world and its workings, one powerful and well-celebrated figure in the Narragansett and other southern New England cultures was Cautantowwit. Cautantowwit was believed to have made people and provided the main staples of indigenous diets—corn and beans. Indigenous communities in this region believed that upon death, the souls of the deceased traveled to Cautantowwit’s home in the southwest (LaFantasie 1988:30; Simmons 1970; Williams 1643). Cautantowwit was recorded as also having equivalents in neighboring tribes. As Simmons (1970) notes, “Several writers mention a Kitan, Ketan, Kytan, or Kichtan, who was

certainly equivalent to Cautantowwit among the Narragansett's neighbors. Described as the overseer of a desirable afterworld in the southwest, he provided good crops, fair weather, and bodily health" (52-3) and provided a place to live forever "voyd of care" (Morton 1883:168). This is also noted archaeologically as the vast majority of deceased individuals from these three sites are oriented with their head to the southwest.

The top of the head and spine were also oriented to the southwest because the Narragansett, and presumably other native peoples of southern New England, believed that it was through the head that the soul traveled at the time of death. An interesting aspect of death and burial rituals, including conceptions of the soul and the directional orientation needed to travel to the afterlife, are the similarities that exist between the burial and birthing processes as both birth and death were liminal stages between this world and the next. Individuals were buried in a flexed position aligned toward the southwest, and this flexed, fetal position parallels the configuration of the body during the birthing process and reflects birth and death as part of life's journey (Simmons 1970). In addition to the analogous head orientation and fetal position of newborn babes and deceased individuals, there are various other parallels to strengthen the tie between these two life phases. These similarities between the moment of life and death include the absence of a name at both birth and death, the soot and grease placed on newborn babies and the blackened faces donned by mourners, the red ochre spread upon the deceased person matching the blood accompanying newborn infants, and the abstinence of mothers from sexual intercourse after birth matching the mourners abstaining from recreational and cosmetic activities upon the death of the given individual (Simmons 1970:60).

While all of the individuals buried in the three cemeteries analyzed were buried in a flexed or fetal position, with the exception of one secondary burial at Long Pond, burial

practices, like all aspects of culture, have changed through time. Burial practices are not static systems but transform diachronically to meet the changing social, political, economic, and religious climate of their peoples. For the indigenous groups of southern New England, Crosby (1988) notes that “Mortuary rituals and the treatment of the dead exhibit a marked degree of continuity and similarity through time and space” (185). Although cremation was favored from the Late Archaic through Early Woodland Periods, by the Late Woodland Period, people were usually buried in a loose or tightly flexed position (Crosby 1988).

Following European contact, however, changes are apparent in burial practices and mortuary assemblages; these modifications in mortuary traditions are suggestive of underlying shifts in native culture and identity. After European contact, cemeteries become a part of the cultural landscape in lieu of individual inhumations (Brenner 1988:156). During the protohistoric period, grave goods were widespread and organized cemeteries appeared near, but outside of, domestic areas; this was opposed to later individual burials within villages or domestic spaces (Brenner 1988). “In the protohistoric period, cemeteries may imply that, even prior to sustained interaction with Euro-Americans, the pressures generated by direct and indirect contacts precipitated the consolidation of a collective identity that was expressed, perhaps among other ways, by burial in collective cemeteries” (Brenner 1988:156). This collective identity resulting from the creation of cemeteries can be juxtaposed with the mortuary traditions that persist throughout the century and show a marked level of homogeneity, such as the uniform orientation, placement, and treatment of the deceased body (Nassaney 2000; Robinson 1990). These enduring mortuary practices are believed by scholars to represent a celebration of group solidarity, ethnic identity, and indigenous traditions (Crosby 1988; Nassaney 2000).

In addition to the establishment of indigenous collective cemeteries, European trade items begin to appear in burial contexts following contact, and throughout the seventeenth century these pieces increase both in number and in diversity (Crosby 1988; Brenner 1988; Nassaney 2000; Robinson 1990; Simons 1970; Turnbaugh 1984); these items were buried with increased frequency because they became slowly entrenched into native culture and/or because they were believed to be in short supply in the afterlife (Simmons 1970). “If Cautantowwit’s house was inadequately provided with the latest European furnishings, his guests were free to bring their own if they or their mourners desired” (Simmons 1970:68). Crosby (1988) suggests that this increase in the quantity and variety of grave goods with certain persons signals a renewed interest in the individual (192).

Although some funerary offerings may have been given to demonstrate a heightened awareness of the individual or to denote status, some European trade items, such as cuprous objects like copper and brass kettles, were deposited as grave goods due to their spiritual essence (Crosby 1988:184). Overall, though, the typical grave good assemblage would “consist of personal possessions (e.g., a pestle, an iron hoe, clothing), ritual items (e.g., a medicine bundle, effigies), and social or ideological objects (e.g., necklaces, headbands)” (McBride 2008:135). Whatever items were chosen to be placed within the grave were picked because of their special connection to the deceased and “were selected on the basis of the individual’s age, gender, role, and status” (McBride 2008:135).

Collectively, this information, in conjunction with the documentary materials provided on age and gender associated items and tasks, provides insight into how the cemeteries and burial remains from the three sites under study may be contextualized. Although gender determined, in large part, the role(s) one possessed and thus the objects and tools handled on a daily basis, age

was another important category that dictated one's place within the community. Mortuary offerings are therefore hypothesized to change not only with the gender roles recorded in the primary documents, but also with the age of the individual. For the next discussion, all sexed individuals used in the statistical analysis are at least in their mid- to late- teens. They would have experienced, or would be close to experiencing, puberty and would likely have undergone a rite of passage into adulthood. Thus their mortuary assemblage, while able to fluctuate slightly by age and status, should hypothetically be well correlated with objects associated with the sexual division of labor, wherein males are hypothesized to be more likely correlated with objects associated with hunting, fishing, and warfare whereas women are likely to be associated with items related to horticultural and food preparation and production tasks.

#### **SITE BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY**

While this study is concerned with the gender systems of indigenous groups in southern New England, the three cemeteries in the analysis are solely from Narragansett and Pequot contexts. These two indigenous populations were noted as being two of the five principal nations in New England (Gookin 1792:7). Although certainly distinct culturally and spatially, they both shared in the broader beliefs, language, and worldview of northeastern horticultural Algonquian-speaking tribes and shared a multitude of cultural similarities, such as presumably similar religious views, burial customs, modes of living and exchange, and gendered divisions of labor.

All three cemeteries have been dated to the seventeenth century with a time span of internment and use of roughly fifteen to twenty years. These three sites were chosen over other available burial data in the region due to their sample size ( $N > 20$ ) and excavation techniques and procedures. An excavation technique refers to the processes by which the individuals were

recovered and recorded and also refers to how sex and age were determined for each individual. It is important to note that not all burials had a definitive sex or age category. For biological sex identification at the three cemeteries, a physical anthropologist present at the time of excavation, or post excavation, determined if the individual was a male or female. In some instances, however, the skeletal remains were too fragmentary, precluding definitive sex identification. Any burials that did not have conclusive sex identifications were not used in the statistical portion of this analysis. Thus out of the total one hundred and twenty-nine burials from the three cemeteries, only seventy-two could be confidently identified with a sex category. For all three cemeteries, burial remains were recovered and analyzed due to impeding construction projects.

Prior to this analysis, the grave good data for each of the three burial grounds had been collated by cemetery. For this study, the data was first separated out by cemetery and each grave good was translated into a presence/absence variable for an original total of forty-eight variables. In addition to the forty-eight presence/absence codings, site, age, and sex were included as categorical variables in the tabulations (**Appendix A** for further information on coding schema).

Based on the above coding schema, all known sex-identified individuals from the three sites (seventy-two in total), were analyzed through the use of similarity coefficients and cluster analysis graphs. Cluster analysis graphs are a visual and statistical method for grouping objects based on shared attributes into clusters (Drennan 2010). The similarity coefficients were found using a statistical software program called SIMS developed by Dr. Robert Drennan of the University of Pittsburgh. SIMS created similarity coefficients for each individual case using Jaccard's coefficient, which measures the similarity and diversity of a dataset. The cluster analysis and all other statistical programming was completed with the use of the software program SYSTAT.

These first analyses and its resulting chi-square output proved inconclusive, mainly due to the fact that there were too many variables skewing and distorting the results. With fewer variables there is less diversity in the dataset, but relationships between variables can become more apparent. Thus, any presence/absence variable which did not appear to account for more than three or four observations and appeared to be highly specific or specialized for a given person were eliminated. Additionally, as the goal of the paper was to study the differences between gendered grave objects, any presence/absence variable that had equal proportions of male to female were eliminated (i.e., wampum drills were found in equal numbers in both male and female funerary offerings and were thus excluded as a variable). Using twenty presence/absence variables instead of forty-eight more appropriately represented the diversity and abundance of materials found within the mortuary contexts as they related to gender classifications (**Appendix B**). The other, eliminated variables, while illuminating, were generally very specific grave goods found in only one or at most a handful of burials (i.e., apothecary jar, seeds, birch bark bag, button). By eliminating the presence/absence variables by around half for gender groupings, the data and its trends became more transparent.

After the exploratory data analysis using SIMS coefficients and cluster analysis, certain groups were found to be highly correlative with gender groupings. A chi-square test was undertaken to test the relative strength and significance of these results. Gender results of the seventy-two cases and twenty variables revealed that there is a significant and strong difference between male and female objects ( $X^2 = 47.79$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ,  $V = 0.549$ ), although more than one-fifth of the expected values are less than five so the results of the chi-square may not be as strong or as significant as the result suggests.

Out of the twenty variables selected for the gender analysis, some discrepancies emerge which demonstrate obvious differences in tasks and roles within society (**Table 2**). As **Table 2** indicates, males are more likely to be associated with weaponry (such as bows and arrows, guns, and musket balls), pipes, iron nails, iron tools, brass/copper beads and scrap metal, headbands, iron cups, whetstones, breastplates, and wampum beads. Females, on the other hand, are more likely to be associated with pestles and iron hoes. Both genders are equally likely to be buried with metal kettles, aboriginal pottery, and iron wampum drills.

<b>Artifact Group</b>	<b>Males (n=35)</b>	<b>Females (n=37)</b>
<i>Weapon</i>	20.0%	2.7%
<i>Pipe</i>	20.0%	0.0%
<i>Metal Kettle</i>	11.4%	16.2%
<i>Aboriginal Pottery</i>	5.7%	5.4%
<i>Pestle</i>	0.0%	8.1%
<i>Iron Nails</i>	20.0%	2.7%
<i>Iron Knives or Tools</i>	34.3%	2.7%
<i>Iron Wampum Drills</i>	5.7%	5.4%
<i>Brass/Copper Beads or Scraps</i>	31.4%	13.5%
<i>Iron Hoe</i>	2.9%	16.2%
<i>Headband</i>	8.6%	0.0%
<i>Iron Cup</i>	14.3%	2.7%
<i>Whetstone</i>	11.4%	0.0%
<i>Breastplate</i>	8.6%	0.0%
<i>Wampum Beads</i>	5.7%	0.0%

**Table 2.** Select grave categories by sex for the three cemeteries under study.

What this collectively suggests is that biological males and females are more commonly associated with artifacts related to their economic tasks as outlined by the previous ethnohistoric research. Since women perform most of the horticultural duties, it would make intuitive sense that females are more likely to be buried with pestles and hoes. Similarly, because males are primarily involved in hunting, fishing, and warfare, it is understandable that weapons, iron knives, breastplates, and whetstones are associated with their biological sex. Objects found in



almost equal proportions with men and women could be used to infer that either sex performed this task.

This pattern also validates previous analyses of the RI-1000 and West Ferry mortuary data. At RI-1000, females were found to be associated with glass beads and bottles, spoons, European bone-handled knives, European ceramics, and iron hoe blades. Males were primarily recovered with wooden-handled European knives and smoking pipes. Both men and women at RI-1000 were associated with “brass beads, shell beads and wampum, native-made brass spoon, and iron nails” (Turnbaugh 1984:7). At West Ferry, the nature and distribution of grave goods clearly suggests a sexual division of labor. Women were associated with iron hoes and brass kettles, whereas men were found with pipes, most unfinished wampum and wampum drills, and “cutting, chopping, and honing tools” (Simmons 1970:46). Glass and shell beads were found with all sex and age categories. Significantly some individuals were associated with gender-associated objects of both males and females suggesting gender dichotomies were not rigid demarcations. While not recorded historically for the groups in question, the mortuary record could indicate that not every person in these native communities conformed to the binary male/female gender structure.

## **OUTLIER BURIALS & EXPLANATIONS**

Once this data was collated, it became apparent that two individuals were associated with a seemingly unique gender role. One individual was buried at RI-1000 and the other was interred at a burial ground in Marblehead, Massachusetts. While this study utilized three cemeteries for the statistical and mathematical analyses, the author had access to a handful of other mortuary data sets. These other cemeteries were not included in the statistical analyses due to their smaller (in some instances only one recorded burial) nature and the not as conclusive

evidence as to the sexing of the remains. This data was also not used due to its unclear excavation methodology and recording strategy, such as at Burr's Hill (Gibson 1980). Despite the exclusion of Marblehead from the analytical dimensions of the study, its interesting burial makes it an appropriate example for the discussion sections to follow. While it cannot be conclusively determined that the individual in question was correctly sexed, the evidence of both typically female and male burial remains suggests that the individual may have subscribed to a gender fluid system.

At RI-1000, the first burial in question was that of a biological male, aged twenty-five to thirty, and identified as burial fifteen. He was buried with a native-made sheet brass spoon, six Jesuit rings, an English white-clay pipe, four cast lead cylinders, a lead musket ball, a heavy iron hoe or adze blade, a grooved sandstone, an iron hoe blade, iron rod, three graphite nodules, and a whetstone. As a biological male he was associated with objects typically found with males in other mortuary contexts including a pipe, munitions, and a whetstone. What makes his grave very interesting, however, is that the individual was also associated with one, and possibly two, iron hoes, which, along with pestles, are exclusively associated with females.

At Marblehead, the individual was identified as an adult biological female (exact age was not provided in the report from which codings were based, only 'adult' was listed) buried with one steatite pipe, three pestles (one of which had an animal-shaped head), one pottery vessel, two shells, one box turtle shell, one copper pot, ears of a second copper pot, and one string of glass beads. The objects of interest associated with the individual include one pestle and one pipe, which are exclusively associated with females and males respectively.

There exist two possible explanations for these anomalies. If we are to assume that these objects were intentionally placed in the burials as grave offerings representative of the

individual's final gender identification during life, the first explanation is that there exists a fluid gender system and that these individuals are possible two-spirits. As aforementioned, there are a multitude of recorded instances of two-spirit individuals within indigenous societies in North America (Callender and Kochems 1983; Roscoe 1998) encompassing almost all regions of the continent and a variety of linguistic groups, including the Eastern Woodlands (Loren 2008), such as the Delaware (Callender and Kochems 1983:444); it should be noted that the descriptions of Delaware two-spirits are, however, "vague and uncertain at best" (Callender and Kochems 1983:446).

Some scholars suggest that the relative silence in historic accounts on two-spirit existence in the northeast signifies their absence or obscurity (Callender and Kochems 1983:446), but the "widespread occurrence of this role among Algonkian-speakers of the Plains (Cheyenne, Arapaho, Blackfoot, and Gros Ventre) and in the subarctic region makes its apparent absence among the eastern Algonkians all the more suspect" (Roscoe 1998:13). Aside from those listed, various other Algonquian-speaking groups, such as the Arapaho, Fox, Illinois, Menomini, Miami, Ojibwa, Potawatomi, Wiyot, and Yurok all exhibit evidence of two-spirit persons (Callender and Kochems 1983:445).

To understand if the two-spirit role was accepted or possibly practiced within a given culture, Callender and Kochems (1983) propose three assumptions to test one's hypothesis.

First, a group whose neighbors were culturally similar and had berdaches probably had them [. . .]. Second, if detailed accounts of a culture by several observers over a period of time are consistently silent, berdaches probably did not exist. Third, if references are lacking for a large cluster of adjacent cultures that are fairly well known, the probability is that berdaches were not present. (444)

It would seem from these assumptions that two-spirit individuals would not exist among the Pequot or Narragansett, as their immediate neighbors have no recorded instances of two-spirit

existence. Taking this into account, however, it should be noted that two-spirits are recorded as being very rare or uncommon (Callender and Kochems 1983:446) and their existence cross-culturally seems to disappear with the occurrence of European contact (Callender and Kochems 1983:443, 446; Hauser 1990:58). This information may suggest that two-spirit existence in the northeast may have an extremely ephemeral time frame during the first decades of contact.

The Iroquois, a neighboring tribal group, also have minimal recorded instances of two-spirits. While of a different language group, their geographic proximity to Algonquian groups of southern New England is relevant to the current discussion. Only one written instance of two-spirit existence survives (Potherie 1722:41), and the chronicler wrote that this way of life was only very rarely witnessed among the Iroquois, and that they condemn this way of life.

Despite the absence of further evidence to support the claim that two-spirit individuals and nonbinary gender systems existed in seventeenth century Pequot and Narragansett tribes, the scant mention of two-spirits in nearby tribal groups, such as the Iroquois and Delaware, the abundance of two-spirit acceptance in other Algonquian indigenous societies, the absence (or near absence) of gender-defining mortuary offerings supplied to children suggesting that gender and gender roles are achieved and not ascribed, and the use of a language system that does not account or make conscious use of gender categories all provide evidence to suggest that there is more to the narrative of northeastern two-spirits than has yet been hypothesized or researched.

Aside from this explanation, there are other plausible reasons why an indigenous woman might be buried with a pipe and a native man with an iron hoe in this time period. The other possible explanation for these anomalous burial contexts is that they are the product and manifestation of European cultural contact and exchange. While this theory cannot be tested directly with the burial data, as all mortuary data is taken from after instances of European

contact and settlement, historical research and analysis by other scholars have shown that there are noticeable changes in material culture and meaning systems resultant from contact.

The advent of European contact and economic systems led to drastic changes in worldwide indigenous social structures, among them gender roles and ideologies (i.e., Etienne and Leacock 1980; Gailey 1980; Gailey 1987; Helm and Leacock 1971; Leacock 1971; Leacock 1980). These changes can be traced and viewed through the mortuary record based upon the types of material culture gifted to the deceased. One category of objects believed to be demonstrative of changing gender roles based upon their shifting meaning, value, and use are smoking pipes. As aforementioned in previous sections, the pipe was an item typically used by men as men were the main cultivators of tobacco. With the influx of European trade items into the indigenous economic market, among them European-manufactured clay pipes, the seemingly strict dichotomy of which persons could use and own pipes began to shift. Pipes and pipe smoking became an activity by the mid-seventeenth century in which men, women, and children could partake (Nassaney 2000; Nassaney and Volmar 2003:85). Nassaney (2000) believes this “created or exacerbated tensions between men and women by undermining male roles associated with the use of tobacco in ritual settings” (424). In response, native men appear to have taken a preference to using hand-made stone pipes, possibly as a method to keep pipes and ritualized smoking as a solely male activity (Nassaney 2000:424-5). It has also been posited that the wider use of smoking pipes gave native women some degree of agency via the ability to subvert and contest the efforts of European colonization, trade, and traditional native male activities. These objects “are physical embodiments of efforts to ameliorate the imbalances that Europeans created in native society” (Nassaney and Volmar 2003:90). What is interesting is that the pipe found in the female burial context at Marblehead is a stone or steatite pipe. Thus its occurrence may

indicate these shifting gender roles, or provide stronger evidence for the existence of a gender fluid system as the shift in gender usage of pipes led to an increase in male use of stone pipes versus the widely available clay pipes.

An additional reason for the incorporation of a stone smoking pipe into an adult women's assemblage may result from the individual's age. While it is not known if the individual was a younger or older adult, if she was found to be an elder, this could offer an additional explanation for her grave good assemblage. Postmenopausal women have greater access to grave goods, and in many societies cross-culturally "postmenopausal women often acquire special status and take on roles as shamans, midwives, or herbalists. Such women, sometimes participate with men in political and religious activities from which they were excluded prior to menopause" (Crown and Fish 1996:810). As these women no longer menstruate, they may no longer be viewed in their society as women "and therefore can be viewed as 'men'" (Crown and Fish 1996:810). As such, elderly women may have had access to a more diversified set of daily occupations and material objects, which would be reflected upon death in their grave assemblages. As the exact age of the individual at Marblehead is not known, this can only be offered as a possible alternative hypothesis.

In addition to the Marblehead burial, European contact may also offer an alternative explanation for the RI-1000 male burial with an iron hoe. "The arrival of Europeans in the seventeenth century had a profound effect on traditional Algonquian male roles" (Bayers 2014:173), such as the shift from a focus on hunting activities to that of farming (Bayers 2014:174). Although this phenomenon did not seem to appear until later in the seventeenth century, after King Philip's War in the 1670s, it is not out of the realm of possibility that males were slowly adopting European practices prior to this event. If within this community males

were beginning to adopt the role of horticulturalist and caretaker of the crops, this could explain why a male would be buried with a hoe.

As a second alternative explanation, metalworking is a common activity in Pequot domestic assemblages, and iron hoes have been demonstrated to be modified for a variety of secondary purposes. While the gender of metalworkers is not known or recorded, the presence of this iron implement within the burial context may signify that the individual reworked metal objects.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Through the analysis of the mortuary remains from three seventeenth century indigenous cemeteries from Connecticut and Rhode Island, it became apparent that certain artifact classes are associated and correlated with biological sex and age categories; these associations also match historical records dictating the division of labor within indigenous society and the types of artifacts one would expect to find with one sex versus another. What also became apparent, however, is that there are two burials with mortuary objects that contained a mix of items which are typically associated with either males or females.

There are a multitude of explanations for the grave goods associated with these two burials. I posit that one possible hypothesis is that, despite a lack of historic documentation, two-spirit individuals were an accepted part of northeastern, and specifically southern New England, indigenous communities. Two-spirit and nonbinary gender systems have been recorded in almost every region of North America, and it is known that a variety of societies that speak a broadly similar parent language also have accepted two-spirit persons. These interesting burial assemblages from the seventeenth century may therefore represent the last vestiges of a vanishing gender system within southern New England.

On the other hand, the almost complete lack of any documentary evidence as to two-spirit existence in the northeast suggests that there are other possible and viable explanations for the analyzed mortuary remains. Although native society was never static and was constantly changing of its own accord, it has been recorded in multiple geographic and temporal settings that contact and colonization had a major impact on indigenous livelihoods and cultures. Seventeenth century southern New England was no exception to this occurrence. From shifting mortuary and burial patterns to a changing gendered division of labor, Europeans and their modes of life had an irrevocable impact on indigenous social systems. The funerary remains from Marblehead and RI-1000 could therefore be hypothesized to be further examples of these changes and cultural shifts occurring during the first century of sustained contact.

Whether there are two-spirits persons in the northeast or there is now further data supporting the notion that European settlement changed aspects of indigenous lifeways, it is apparent that more information is needed to gain a better understand the gender roles and ideologies of the tribal nations of southern New England. In future iterations of this research, more burial remains information is needed to provide a larger sample size and to discover if other ‘anomaly’ burials exist. Once this is complete, a more representative picture of mortuary practices and gender systems within the northeast can be understood.



### **CHAPTER 3: NATIVE MASCULINITIES, SYSTEMS OF WARFARE, AND ADORNMENT: A STUDY OF CUPROUS UTILITARIAN AND DECORATIVE BATTLEFIELD ASSEMBLAGES**

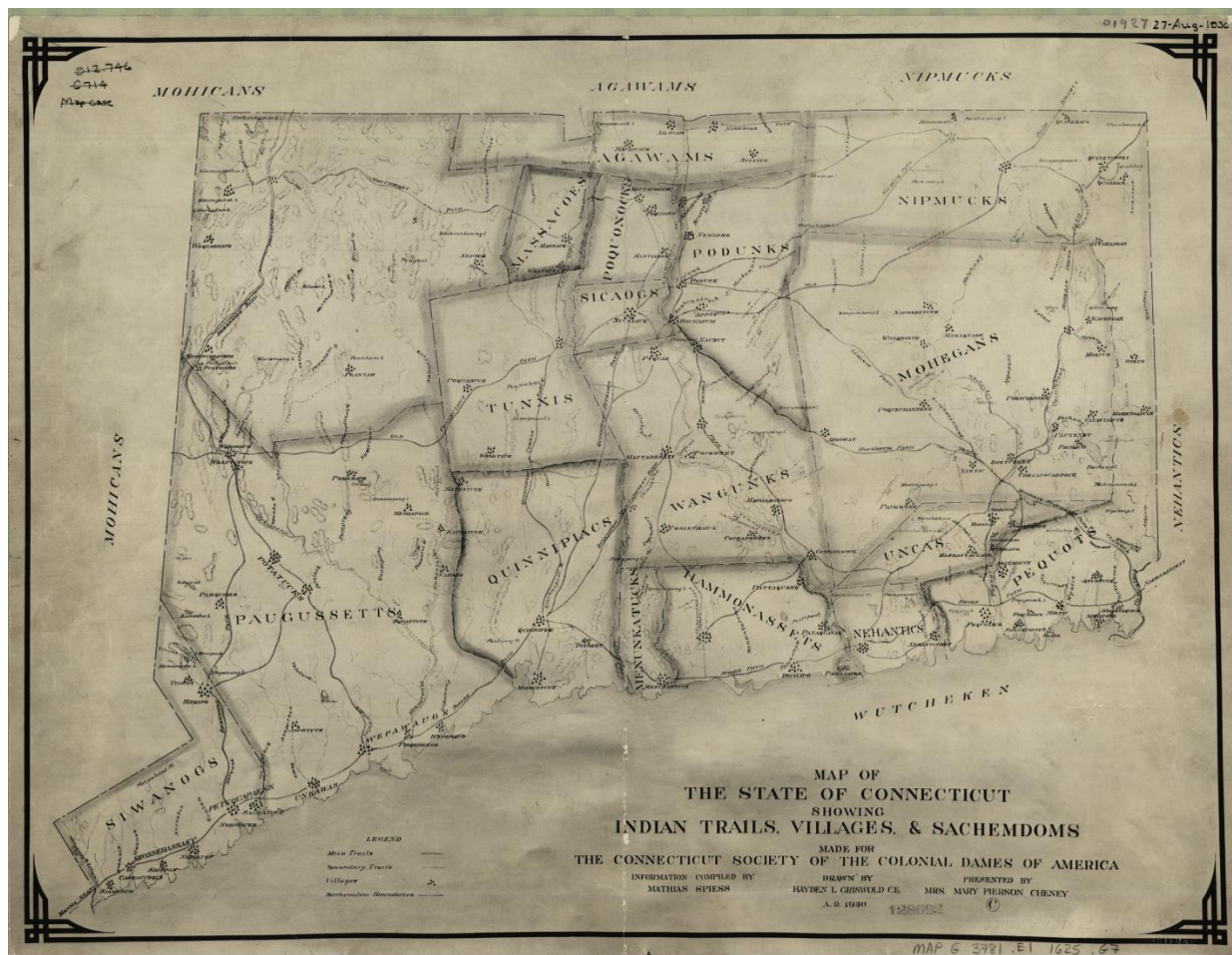
#### **INTRODUCTION**

In the early morning of May 26, 1637, the English and their native Narragansett and Mohegan allies surrounded and burned the Pequot fortified village at Mystic; within the span of one hour, hundreds of Pequot men, women, and children perished. Immediately following this attack, later to be called the Mystic Massacre, the English retreated to their ships and were pursued by Pequot men who mobilized from surrounding villages. Fighting was continuous along six miles of the retreat route and resulted in the loss, breakage, and discard of hundreds of metallic weaponry, utilitarian objects, and personal items. Some of these cuprous, lead, and ferrous items, based upon their morphology, manufacture, and spatial context in relation to other dropped objects, have been determined to be of native manufacture and/or worn and carried by native men during the battle. These native-manufactured materials are the focus of the current study as they provide significant insights into many aspects of native society, including native cosmology, gender systems, and ideologies of warfare, during the first decades of the seventeenth century.

To examine how the analysis of metallic material remains can deepen our understanding of southern New England's indigenous social systems and ontologies, this paper will chart the historical trajectory of cuprous metal usage prior to and during European contact and address the resultant changes in valuation and use brought about by the introduction of European cuprous and ferrous trade materials. This historical timeline, or for the purposes of this paper what will be termed the social biography or use life of cuprous and ferrous objects, will then be focused on the manufactured byproducts of re-processed European trade materials to test the hypothesis that native metallic scrap, utilitarian, and decorative items worn by native men during battle represent

and reflect native masculinities and cosmologies during the early seventeenth century in southern Connecticut. This analysis will borrow loosely from behavioral archaeology and from other theories on the cultural biography of objects to assess how metallic objects, and specifically cuprous items, were valued and conceptualized both before and during European contact.

The goal of this research is to provide a greater understanding of the gender, technological, and cosmological systems of Pequot society for which little is recorded. During the period of initial European contact, the Pequots occupied the coastal area between the Thames River in Connecticut and the Wecapaug region in western Rhode Island (Cave 1996:43; McBride 1991). In **Figure 1**, a map from the University of Connecticut Libraries' Map and Geographic Information Center (MAGIC) highlights the general location of the Pequot nation circa 1625.



**Figure 1.** Map of Native American Territories in CT circa 1625 (Griswold 1930).

The Pequot exerted influence over various sachems and sachemships in Connecticut, Long Island, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts and are noted as being one of the five principal nations of New England (Bragdon 1996; Gookin 1792:7). While they controlled a region-wide network of tributary tribes and trade, eventual hostilities and miscommunication between the Pequots and English colonists culminated in the Pequot War. The Pequot War (1636-1637) was the first war waged in southern New England between English colonists and Native Americans. By the end of the war, many Pequot lives were lost and a multitude of surviving Pequot members were sold into servitude (Cremer 2008). The defeat of the Pequots permitted Puritan and English settlement expansion and demonstrated the force of the English to surrounding tribes, leading to a period of unsettled peace before the next major war in the region, King Philip's War, in the 1670s (Kupperman 1980:7, 22).

Two of the most significant events of the Pequot War were the battles of Mystic Fort and the English Withdrawal. The metallic artifacts dropped by the Pequot and by the Mohegan, Narragansett, and Wangunk allies of the English along the English allied route of retreat are the focus of this paper. These various objects carried and/or utilized by native men in battle are analyzed and compared to cuprous and ferrous objects found at two nearby contemporaneous Pequot domestic sites, Calluna Hill and Mystic Fort, to determine if and how the Pequot repurposed cuprous and ferrous trade items. They are also studied to determine if there are discernible patterns in the creation and use of copper and brass "scrap" items and to understand the use and association of domestic metallic objects in military contexts.

The first Pequot domestic site studied is Calluna Hill (Site 59-73). Calluna Hill is believed, based upon its location and archaeological assemblage, to be the location of several wigwams burned by the English during their retreat after the Mystic Massacre as described in

John Mason's *A Brief History of the Pequot War* (1736). The following short passage dictates all that is known historically about Calluna Hill: "There was at the Foot of the Hill a small Brook, where we rested and refreshed our selves, having by that time taught them a little more Manners than to disturb us. We then Marched on towards Pequot Harbour; and falling upon several Wigwams, burnt them" (Mason 1736:32). Excavations and surveys at Calluna Hill have occurred sporadically over the past three field seasons and have recovered dozens of metallic objects as well as Native and European ceramics. The second site used in this analysis is the Pequot fortified village at Mystic, the location of the Mystic Massacre. Mystic Fort (Site 59-19) was metal-detected and excavated within the past decade and various cuprous, ferrous, and ceramic items have been recovered.

The metal artifacts discovered from these two domestic contexts, in addition to those found along the retreat route, are examined in regards to their form, apparent functionality, and evidence of reworking. A metric analysis methodology, as utilized by Anselmi (2004) and Morrell (2013), was employed in this analysis to study the metal artifacts in regards to their metric properties and the techniques used to manufacture and create their current form (i.e., evidence of shearing, puncturing, folding, hammering, scoring, etc.). These types of analyses aid in highlighting the active role native participants possessed in recrafting and maintaining their pre-contact ideologies in the wake of the disruptive effects of European contact and colonialism. These manipulations of trade items also indicate the possible functionality and purpose of the recrafted objects based upon their shape, method of decoration, and degree of thickness.

While there is a considerable body of literature on the occurrence, effects and aftermath of the Pequot War (i.e., Cave 1996; Hauptman 1990; Mason 1736; Orr 1897; Salisbury 1990; Starna 1990), there has been little recorded on the culture, social systems, or quotidian lives of

the Pequots prior to their defeat in 1637. Similarly, it is not known how or why certain items not related to military functions were carried by Native men during battle. By studying the native metallic scrap, decorative, and utilitarian items recovered along the English Withdrawal in regards to their reuse properties, the cultural narratives and worldviews of these people can be extrapolated and the significance or lack thereof of cuprous and ferrous scrap metal and non-weaponry metal in military and domestic arenas can be better understood.

### **THEORETICAL CONCEPTS**

To begin to understand the repurposing of European trade items by native groups, indigenous ideologies concerning metal and the processes of consumption and technical manipulation performed by Natives on European trade items must be explored. After trade occurred between indigenous peoples and Dutch, French, and English tradesmen, these metallic objects were incorporated into native material culture repertoires and repurposed for uses to which they were not originally intended. Items believed by Europeans to be technologically superior to native utilitarian items and weaponry (i.e., brass and iron kettles, guns, cloth) and represent examples of “modern” ingenuity and civilization were indigenized, transformed, and incorporated into native culture.

These material objects that were traded, incorporated, reused, and discarded by European and native peoples are representative of the cultures through which they were created, moved, and valued. These objects and the technological acts performed to create them “are a fundamental medium through which social relationships and world views are defined and reaffirmed” (Dobres 1995:28). Culture, materiality, and technology are inextricably entangled, wherein belief systems and cultural attitudes determine the use and value of objects and how those objects are to be made, repurposed, and discarded (Dobres 2010). Through the study of the

social biography of an object, one can begin to document these connections between social structures and the creation and daily maintenance of material items.

The social biography studied in the current paper is that of cuprous and ferrous trade commodities that were either accepted in their physical original form (i.e., Jesuit rings) or manufactured into materials worn and/or used by Native warriors during battle (i.e., the creation and use of scrap metal or projectile points from mediums such as copper kettles). Although some items might have been accepted without direct physical manipulation, all, or most, European trade items likely underwent some form of a transformation of meaning and/or value upon reaching indigenous hands and homes. These artifacts have social histories or cultural biographies as material objects (Appadurai 1986; Gosden and Marshall 1999; Joy 2009; Kopytoff 1986; Turgeon 1997) and can be considered almost as living things (Mauss 2002) and/or as embodiments of people's dispositions, sociality, and cultural traditions (Pauketat 2007). As such, they are permeated with different layers of meaning throughout the process of production, commoditization, and consumption. Utilizing a life or social history approach is important for understanding how "objects become invested with meaning through the social interactions they are caught up in. These meanings change and are renegotiated through the life of an object" (Gosden and Marshall 1999:170).

Additionally, some of these meanings that are forged and crafted during social interactions may involve group and/or individual participants who are creating and using the materials for subversive or political purposes or for the creation and maintenance of social or individual identity (Howey 2011; Silliman 2001), including gender identity (Dobres 1995). The continual use and creation of these objects is in itself a social act, and it helps to enact and enforce social relations of production (Dobres and Hoffman 1994), such as a gendered division

of labor as played out and reinforced daily through the use and social interactions inherent in technological activities and systems (Dobres 1995:28).

One specific phase of the biography of an object, which may involve social interactions or the creation of individual identity, is during the act of using and recrafting the material object. The act of consumption and technical manipulation of European trade items is represented through Marshal Sahlins' (1999) conception of the indigenization of modernity, where modernity signifies Western objects of trade. The indigenization of modernity is described as "a desire to indigenize" the commodities and relations inherent in the capitalistic world-system (Sahlins 1999:x) and can be used to explain the techniques of integration and manipulation employed by indigenous consumers after receiving European trade materials. The indigenous inhabitants of the region culturally indigenize alien items and incorporate them into their material culture assemblage to create a new cultural scheme, authenticity, and identity (Sahlins 1999:xi). While Sahlins' (1999) argument focuses mainly on the current issues surrounding notions of modernity as intersected with indigenous communities, migration, and capitalism, his basic premise that indigenous peoples utilize Western technology for their own purposes and to their own advantage to integrate technology and culture is relevant for the purposes of this paper.

Value is also an important component to consider when speaking about modernity, which is a concept not often used in archaeological analyses. To understand modernity is to understand what becomes important or valued in a society, the processes of power involved in these systems of valuation, and the system of exchange in relation to individual conceptions of value (Geertz 1995). For the purposes of this research, modernity in seventeenth century southern New England translates to English tools, trade items, and methods of manufacture. These objects are considered modern or Western because they are the byproducts and commodities of an

increasingly globalized society driven by the principles of market exchange and profit. They also originate from a Western, European power, and the concept modernity is often linked to ideals of the West, capitalism, and globalism.

### **EARLY USES OF NATIVE COPPER**

Before a formal discussion of the social life of a European trade item and its subsequent reuse can commence, it should be noted how copper items were already valued in many parts of pre-contact North America. Multiple scholars have found, based on primary sources, mortuary evidence, and archaeological studies, that various cultural groups in the New World prior to European contact valued metallic objects (Anselmi 2004; Ehrhardt 2005, 2009; Ehrhardt, Nash, and Swann 2000; Mauss 2002:43; Morrell 2013; Wroth 1970). Some individuals believe that in most cases, both in North America and elsewhere, metals were first utilized for decorative or religious functions and were not fashioned into utilitarian items. As Renfrew (1986) notes, “In most cases early metallurgy appears to have been practiced primarily because the products have novel properties that made them attractive to use as symbols and as personal adornments and ornaments” (146). Similarly, Renfrew (1986) discusses how the forms of native copper manufacture, such as annealing, would not necessarily make copper tools better at performing a certain task than a quality stone tool. Binford (1962) also suggests that copper tools can take a great deal of energy and time to create when viewed against the process of creating stone or bone tools. Ehrhardt (2005) states, however, that copper possesses exceptional working qualities, making it an easy medium from which to construct tools and visual display items (80).

Binford (1962) and Pulford (1999), on the other hand, provide a slightly different historical trajectory than those who posit metal first held symbolic or religious functions for all societies. While the use and knowledge of copper-working in the New World existed for at least



7,000 years (Ehrhardt 2005:56), it had not throughout that long span of time always held ritual or symbolic importance to native peoples. During the Old Copper complex, lasting from the Archaic Period(s) until the beginning of the Early Woodland Period, copper was used for primarily utilitarian functions and tasks (Binford 1962:220). After the Early and Middle Woodland Periods, however, the use of copper shifted to being used for the creation of more non-utilitarian, highly valued wares. Pulford (1999) supports this theory with her doctoral research on copper usage in mortuary contexts. She found that in burial settings from the Archaic Period, copper was primarily crafted into utilitarian objects. Later during the Woodland Period, however, copper utilitarian objects become “virtually absent” (52) and are instead replaced with decorative items. This is documented in New England sites, and especially Connecticut and Massachusetts, where there was “a major change in mortuary copper [. . .] with ornamental copper predominating significantly over tools” (58). Pulford (1999) posits that this shift may be the result of changing subsistence strategies and/or change in the daily use and conception of copper items. Binford (1962), however, hypothesizes that this shift in copper usage occurred as a result of burgeoning population growth, shifting political systems, and a need to differentiate oneself in regards to status. Copper and valued cuprous items thus became status symbols for a developing social stratification system in many parts of the New World.

Historical evidence indicates that in early instances of cultural contact, copper was utilized for decorative rather than functional purposes. One such example is found in the letters written by the explorer Giovanni da Verrazzano. In 1524, Verrazzano sailed along the east coast of North America and encountered various coastal indigenous groups, including the Narragansett tribe of southern New England. The Narragansett were located in close proximity to the Pequots

within the confines of present-day Rhode Island. Verrazzano, as transcribed by Lawrence Wroth (1970), wrote:

[. . .] and we saw that they had many sheets of worked copper which they prize more than gold. They do not value gold because of its color; they think it the most worthless of all, and rate blue and red above all colors. [. . .] They did not appreciate cloth of silk and gold, nor even of any other kind, nor did they care to have them; the same was true for metals like steel and iron, for many times when we showed them some of our arms, they did not admire them, nor ask for them, but merely examined the workmanship. (138)

Copper appears from this interaction to be a highly valued material. Its function as a mostly non-utilitarian material was further illustrated when Verrazzano observed that, “Their arrows are worked with great beauty, and they tip them not with iron but with emery, jasper, hard marble, and other sharp stones. They use the same kind of stone instead of iron for cutting trees, and make their little boats with a single log of wood” (Wroth 1970:139). As Renfrew (1986) suggested, while native groups may have had access to cuprous sources, quality stone was still predominantly used as the preferred medium for tool creation.

Verrazzano’s descriptions of the Narragansett in the early sixteenth century sheds light on underlying reasons for the value given to cuprous metal. Verrazzano mentions that hue is intimately connected to the worth of an item. While gold was, and still is, highly valued in many Western societies, indigenous groups did not prize it because of its coloration. Copper, however, as red, lustrous, and reflective was associated with “animation, emotion, intense experience—with fire, heat, and blood” (Miller and Hamell 1986:325). The red hue of copper was especially important as it was one of the colors, in addition to white and black, which organized ritual states-of-being (Hamell 1992:456). Red objects were believed to mediate between the light (white) and dark (black) forces of the cosmos (Hamell 1992) and be a symbol of life, fertility, emotion, and power (Ehrhardt, Nash, and Swann 2000).

Native groups believed copper to have religious and medicinal qualities that resulted from its color and its associations in cosmology. Bradley and Childs (2007) note that copper was used for “ritual healing and invoked its traditional guardian, the Underwater Panther” (304), a being which held sway over the Underworld and whose tail was covered by copper scales. “Those fortunate enough to find or possess a piece of copper from the Panther’s tail had a charm of great healing power” (Bradley and Childs 2002:304). It has also been noted that in Algonquian, Iroquoian, and Siouan traditions, of which the Pequot and peoples of southern New England are within the Algonquian language and tradition, there existed various legends “associating copper with powerful spirits” (Pulford 1999:27).

In addition to the potency copper possessed resulting from its hue and cosmological associations, copper in at least one Algonquian dialect also had powerful meanings resulting from its linguistic origins. In a dialect of Algonquin, Ojibwe, which is an indigenous tribe from the Lake Superior region, linguistic analysis demonstrates that the stem word of copper (and also iron, glass, and mirrors) can be translated to “changing form.” Copper in at least one Algonquian dialect is therefore a substance that was readily changeable, and this was apparent not only in its malleability but also in its ability to change color through patination (Pulford 1999:102). Within the wider scope of indigenous cosmology, beings that possessed the power to transform and shift from one plane to another, such as amphibians or birds, were believed to be extremely powerful (Kevin McBride, personal communication, May 24, 2016). Therefore copper could also be argued to have conceptually and physically represented a powerfully charged entity to native peoples based upon its ability to be easily manipulated and transformed.

Copper in the New World therefore had a long history of use and valuation prior to the arrival of Europeans. Although copper was not always considered a valued object by indigenous

peoples (Binford 1962; Pulford 1999), by the time period directly preceding and concomitant with European contact, copper held an important role in native cosmologies and social systems as a substance representative of status and power.

#### **EUROPEAN TRADE, METAL PRODUCTION, AND EXCHANGE**

These conceptions held by native populations on the value of copper and its role in society would have a profound impact on the first instances of cultural contact. As McBride (2008) notes, “Native people initially perceived Europeans as culture-heroes, supernatural man-beings who had returned from the beyond the sea, bringing with them materials and substances of power” (138) such as copper and glass items valued for their aforementioned hue, cosmological ties, linguistic properties, and reflective qualities. The appearance of these “other-worldly ceremonial materials” (Miller and Hamell 1986:325) and their availability and amount “would have acted as a potent catalyst in the quest for strength and power” (Moussette 2009:43). The items being traded for this power over resources and trade networks included objects such as metallic (brass, copper, and iron) bells, rings, cups, plates, boxes, guns, and kettles.

Before the arrival in the New World of these finished trade products, copper and brass objects began their life histories in the forges of Europe where they were devalued for their intrinsic qualities. While in Europe during the late Neolithic and Copper Age, copper was viewed in certain areas, such as Anatolia, as a highly valued metal (Lehner and Yener 2014), by the fifteenth- and sixteenth-centuries copper “was primarily employed to make objects for everyday use” including coinage (Turgeon 1997:4) and was continually devalued in relation to silver and gold. Copper’s debasement and mixing with brass to create imitation gold eventually made it less suited for symbolic purposes. It became, instead, “favored in the manufacture of industrial products and domestic objects” (Turgeon 1997:5). Copper and brass spread rapidly

through trade routes in northeastern North America, and copper was exported in large quantities to the New World, especially in the form of kettles. The kettle “became one of the most important European commodities traded to Native Americans” (Ehrhardt 2005:72) and “seems to have been the most sought-after copper object” (Turgeon 1997:10). Despite the desire and demand for cuprous kettles, the raw metallic material still remained in European eyes an undesired, undervalued metal when compared to precious metals such as silver or gold. The valuation of this metal medium for Europeans was therefore different from that of the native peoples with whom they would trade.

During this process of trading, the material object became very important as a tool of cultural communication. Pidgin languages were created between English and indigenous New World inhabitants for communication and trade purposes (Goddard 1977). In this pidgin language, “The few extant words designate objects and groups that played a part in commercial exchange, or they evoke the relations between trading partners” (Turgeon 1997:3). Because traders and natives were generally not able to fully communicate verbally, “the material object became the preferred means of exchange and communication” (Turgeon 1997:3). The traded object thus became the means of representing and communicating trade relationships between individual persons and nations and provided the basis for a language between cultural groups.

From this lack of communication skills and due to the processes of exchange, indigenous peoples would name Europeans based upon the items of their trade. The material object in the act and aftermath of trade thus became a signifier and symbol of a person, a foreign culture, and a technological system. This is exemplified when Roger Williams (1643) wrote, “Whence they call *Englishmen* Chanquaquock, that is *Knive-men*, stone formerly being to them instead of

*Knives, Awle-blades, Hatchets, and Howes*” (38). The material object in this instance represented the Other and provided a basis for understanding European culture and materiality.

Metallic objects as cultural items, while representing and embodying new technological systems, are also transformed and incorporated into existing systems of indigenous ideologies, as will be demonstrated in the next stage of the social biography of metallic trade materials.

#### **NATIVE USE OF EUROPEAN TECHNOLOGY**

While metal played a large role in the European trade market, Native people were still active in the process of repurposing some of these items for their own ends. Removed from the exchange system and no longer viewed as a commodity, European metals in native hands experienced a shift in valuation from debased brass and copper items to highly valued reflective objects. These objects were valuable “*not* for their uniqueness, but for their similarity to native substances” (Miller and Hamell 1986:318). Since many native groups were already familiar with copper and had preconceptions on the importance of this metallic medium in native lifeways, it was easy to assimilate these trade objects into existing ideological systems. These items were not acquired for their modernity or supposed superiority during the early stages of contact, but for their resemblance to an existing important cultural material within indigenous social structures.

Although these objects may have been valued in their European cuprous finished forms, many items recovered archaeologically were cut, chiseled, sheared, bent, and repurposed into new forms (Anselmi 2004; Bradley and Childs 1987, 2002; Ehrhardt 2005; Loren 2008; Morrell 2013; Moussette 2009). Repurposing implies not only the actual act of cutting and transforming a trade item into a different shape, but can also entail cultural and symbolic appropriation without physical manipulation. This process of repurposing European trade items for native use

represents a form of Sahlins' (1999) indigenization of modernity where the "modern" technology of the Europeans is fit into existing indigenous world and social systems for self- and community-directed goals. Therefore, it is not necessarily important or significant that foreign objects or ideas are adopted into native systems, but what is significant is "the way they are culturally redefined and put to use" (Kopytoff 1986:67). Kettles were the frequent medium of this manipulation and made into a variety of both decorative and utilitarian objects, such as jewelry and projectile points (Anselmi 2004; Bradley and Childs 2002; Morrell 2013). While evidence at the three sites of the current study demonstrates that items, such as iron knives and hoes, were also cut and repurposed into new forms, it seems likely that kettles and thin cuprous objects were the desired substance of (re)manufacture because they were very thin, malleable, and thus easily manipulated.

Most of the cut, chiseled, and hammered repurposed trade pieces closely resembled those produced and consumed prior to European contact as they were being crafted in the same methodological way – through hammering, annealing, and abrasion (Engelbrecht 2003). Although the majority of forms created speak to a cultural continuity of technological manipulation and ideological significance, there were also recorded instances of the creation of new forms out of European trade copper – copper shapes and material items that do not appear to have existed prehistorically. The copper and brass spirals found at multiple archaeological sites across the Northeast are one such example of a newly created form. These spirals were "the product of the interaction between two cultures" (Engelbrecht 2003:136) and were "among the earliest distinctive objects that Native Americans made from European material" (Bradley and Childs 2002:290). These new metallic spiral forms are believed to be representative of the Underwater Panther's tail, which possessed healing powers. Bradley and Childs (2002) argue

that the creation of this new type of spiritual metallic form was in response to the slew of diseases Europeans brought to the New World. The creation of the spirals acted as “an appeal to the healing power of the Panther” (Bradley and Childs 2002:304) and as a charm of protection to ward away disease. By taking European trade items and crafting them into their own cosmology and healing rituals, native groups may have believed that they were able to guard against the deleterious side effects being wrought due to European contact.

These spirals are rare, however, and for the three sites under study no spiral forms have yet been recovered. Although we have no direct evidence that the Pequot created or used these spiral pieces, this example serves to demonstrate that indigenous peoples throughout North America not only mimicked pre-contact forms of metallic imagery but also created entirely new forms with their own societal meanings. Whether repeating past copper shapes and production strategies or producing entirely novel designs, the tools and decorative pieces crafted out of European trade materials serve as a physical signifier of the social relationship between Europeans and Natives and the intersection of their cultures.

### **METALLIC SCRAP ARTIFACTS FROM THREE ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXTS**

Metallic trade commodities thus underwent a series of technical and social transformations to create newly finished forms. At the three archaeological sites under study, metallic objects will first be studied in regards to their typology and functional final form to garner an overall conception of the types and amounts of certain artifact classes present within each assemblage. The metal artifacts will then be studied in regards to manipulation properties to better understand the processes and types of manufacture typically employed at each site.

At Calluna Hill, metals, in addition to other artifact categories, have been recovered through the use of metal detectors and excavation over the course of three years. One hundred



and ninety-eight metals have been recovered from Calluna Hill, out of which ninety-seven were determined, based upon on their shape, manipulation techniques, and archival comparative materials to be both of the seventeenth century and of native use. Metals are roughly equal proportions cuprous (copper and brass) and ferrous, and cuprous artifacts are overall much thinner than their ferrous counterparts (**Table 3**). There was also one melted lead item recovered.

Artifacts recovered from Calluna Hill include projectile point fragments, sheet and scrap cuprous and iron fragments, hand wrought nail fragments, cuprous amulets, beads, knife fragments, buckle and strap fragments, and unidentifiable purpose metal fragments. A more comprehensive list of artifact groupings and their relative frequencies can be found in **Table 4**. At Calluna Hill, the majority artifact class is scrap and sheet metal (33.0%), followed closely by unidentifiable metals (24.7%) and miscellaneous objects (24.7%), including such items as bar and strap fragments, hinges, and nail fragments. Unidentifiable metals are those that have an unusual form and may be something other than scrap metal, but information is lacking on the exact function of the object. It is possible, though, that the unidentifiable metals at this site and the remaining two sites are further instances of scrap metal or pieces broken off of a larger metallic object.

From the current assemblage of artifacts we can readily identify, it appears that metalworking and the manufacture of repurposed items was a predominant activity at Calluna Hill, as evidenced both by the amount of scrap and sheet metal and by the number of identifiable, manipulated objects (cut hoes, boxes, knives, ect.) recovered. The relative dearth of the byproducts of these reworking processes (i.e., amulets, beads, hooks, and projectile points

comprising roughly 10% of the assemblage) in relation to the amount of sheet, scrap, and unidentifiable metals suggests three possible explanations.

The first possible reason for the current assemblage and its small percentage of byproducts is that immediately following creation, finished forms were taken out of the domestic context for use in trade, warfare, medicinal matters, or other venues. A second plausible explanation is that the metallic finished forms may have been generally worn or carried on one's person instead of being located in areas of metal object creation, storage, and discard, and thus when people were fleeing or fighting, the majority of finalized forms may have been taken with them. The third explanation is that the assemblage from this particular site is unique, and Calluna Hill is the site of specialized war-time material production. Calluna Hill is an ephemeral site and is believed to have been recently relocated, perhaps in anticipation of an English or native allied attack, between the two Pequot fortified villages of Mystic and Weinshauks, which are located two and a half miles apart. In addition to its relocation, the much more diversified set of cuprous objects at Calluna Hill when compared to those at Mystic Fort, which appear to be mostly kettle fragments, lends support to this third hypothesis. Further testing of the material assemblages from other domestic villages dating to the Pequot War era is needed, however, before this third hypothesis can be accepted or discredited.

At Mystic Fort, there is a similar trend towards metal reworking and maintenance. At the Fort, twenty-six metals have been recovered and dated to the seventeenth century, and twenty-five of these were determined to be of indigenous manufacture and use. Metals are again both cuprous and ferrous (**Table 3**), although there appears, based on the small sample size of this site, to be a bias towards cuprous (i.e. copper or brass) metals. Cuprous items are again demonstrated to have a relatively low thickness value with a mean value of 0.85mm.

Determining the thickness of the two ferrous items was not possible at Mystic Fort. One lead item, a piece of slab, was also recovered at Mystic Fort and may have been used by the Pequots.

The assemblage from this site is indicative of metal production as almost all of the recovered metals are sheet fragments or slag (**Table 4**). Similar to Calluna Hill, indigenous metalworking in village settings appears to be a main activity, with few byproducts recovered. Mystic Fort is distinct from Calluna Hill, however, in that it was a well-established fortified village, and as such one might hypothesize that there would be more metallic objects recovered or at least a few utilitarian trade items or byproducts of (re)manufacture. The apparent absence of finished tool and decorative products may be indicative of indigenous metalworking practices at all domestic sites, wherein metallic byproducts are normally taken out of the confines of the village and utilized within the larger landscape. What seems more probable, however, is that this assemblage suffers from sampling bias, as the hundreds of men, women, and children that lived within the fort very likely possessed at least a handful of metallic decorative or utilitarian pieces. Additionally, the site is now located within a residential neighborhood that has experienced decades of use and refuse accumulation. The hundreds of eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth century metallic objects identified and recovered on and around the area of the fort may well have “hidden” from view other possible seventeenth century artifacts from metal detecting surveys. Future testing at another fort of the same time era may provide a better comparative context and aid in determining how representative the current metallic sample is of domestic life in a fortified village setting.

In addition to the two domestic sites, metallic artifacts were also studied along the route of the English Withdrawal. Along the retreat route, two hundred and five metal artifacts out of a total of three hundred and nineteen were determined to be associated with the seventeenth

century Pequot or the Native allies of the English. The majority of artifacts, or roughly two-thirds, are cuprous, and the remaining one-third include ferrous, lead, and pewter items (**Table 3**). Cuprous items are again much thinner than ferrous artifacts.



**Figure 2.** Cuprous projectile and conical points recovered from two sites along the retreat route. All photos in **Figures 2-6** are courtesy of the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center.



**Figure 3.** An assortment of metallic artifacts recovered from Calluna Hill.



**Figure 4.** Cuprous scrap and one possible amulet/medallion (top row, middle column) from along the retreat route.



**Figure 5.** Cuprous bead from the retreat route.



**Figure 6.** Cuprous hair comb recovered from the retreat route.

Along the route of English withdrawal, one finds a much more varied assemblage. Although there is still a large portion of unidentifiable and scrap and sheet metal, there are also scissor fragments, metallic pipes, bracelets, combs, and Jesuit rings, in addition to a larger proportion of projectile points, axes and adzes, kettle fragments, hooks, beads, knife fragments, and amulets (**Table 4**). What is perhaps most interesting is that while many metallic weapons are present, there are far more decorative and scrap metal fragments (including kettle and scissor fragments) being carried by native warriors into battle than that found in domestic contexts. There are also items typically connotative of status, such as the nine recovered Jesuit rings, found along the retreat route that were not found in either domestic setting. Although the noticeably larger sample size (**Table 3**) could aid in the diversity of the retreat route assemblage, another possible explanation is the aforementioned idea that finished and valued byproducts (such as arrow points and decorative pieces) are more likely to be worn on one's person than deposited in a centralized midden, storage, or manufacturing location within domestic settings. Within the past two months, additional possible domestic sites have been located near or directly

along the retreat route from which these materials were analyzed. Although dating of these sites has yet to occur, additional domestic contexts near the Withdrawal may have also contributed to components of this signature.

	MYSTIC FORT	CALLUNA HILL	RETREAT ROUTE
<b>Amount Copper (Cu)</b>	43	22	141
<b>Average Thickness Cu (mm)</b>	0.97	0.85	0.96
<b>Amount Iron (Fe)</b>	53	3	49
<b>Average Thickness Fe (mm)</b>	3.72	NA	3.20

**Table 3.** Thickness and count of cuprous and ferrous artifacts.

<i>ARTIFACT CLASSES</i>	CALLUNA HILL	MYSTIC FORT	RETREAT ROUTE
<i>Unidentifiable</i>	24 (24.7%)	1 (4.0%)	87 (42.4%)
<i>Sheet and Scrap Metal</i>	32 (33.0%)	13 (52.0%)	26 (12.7%)
<i>Slag</i>	0 (0.0%)	7 (28.0%)	0 (0.0%)
<i>Projectile Points</i>	5 (5.2%)	1 (4.0%)	30 (14.6%)
<i>Adzes &amp; Axes</i>	2 (2.1%)	1 (4.0%)	4 (2.0%)
<i>Hooks</i>	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (2.9%)
<i>Beads</i>	2 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (2.0%)
<i>Decorative Pieces</i>	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (1.4%)
<i>Kettle Fragments</i>	0 (0.0%)	1 (4.0%)	4 (2.0%)
<i>Scissor Fragments</i>	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.5%)
<i>Amulets</i>	2 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (3.9%)
<i>Knife Fragments</i>	4 (4.1%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (3.4%)
<i>Iron Hoe Fragments</i>	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.5%)
<i>Jesuit Rings</i>	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	9 (4.4%)
<i>Misc. Other (Nail Fragments, Bars, ect.)</i>	24 (24.7%)	1 (4.0%)	15 (7.3%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	97 (100.0%)	25 (100.0%)	205 (100.0%)

**Table 4.** Artifact assemblage at three sites.

Metallic objects, specifically copper kettles, are reworked and repurposed into new forms fitting Pequot ideological, economic, and social systems. To study this reworking, I followed the metric analysis methodology utilized by Anselmi (2004) and Morrell (2013) wherein metals are analyzed in regards to their metric properties and the techniques used to manufacture and create their current form (i.e., evidence of shearing, puncturing, folding, hammering, scoring, ect.). For

all three archaeological sites, folding, puncturing, and rolling are the predominant reworking methods. Most items were obviously cut, but the edges of many cut items could not be reliably studied to discern the method of cutting, either by shears, chisel, or another implement.

Out of the ninety-seven metals believed to be of native use at Calluna Hill, 51 (or roughly 52%) were manipulated in some way to produce new objects out of European trade items and technologies. At Mystic Fort, 7 out of the total 25 indigenous metals, or about 28%, exhibit evidence of physical repurposing. Along the withdrawal route, eighty-one of the metals, or roughly 40% of metallic artifacts, showed evidence of direct manipulation, which includes perforation, scoring, cutting with shears and chisels, beveling edges, bending, and rolling. Eight of these reworked objects, two at Calluna Hill and six found along the English Withdrawal, based upon their degree of scoring/etching and the perforated hole at one end, suggests that they may have been charms, decorative pieces, or amulets of some kind (**Figure 4**).

Metal pieces were reworked in these ways to produce decorative and utilitarian objects. For the most part at the three sites, the reworked artifacts appear to have been repurposed so as to create decorative objects that are scored, rolled and/or perforated. No objects appeared to be sharpened or made into a specific tool shape aside from the projectile points recovered. Overall, though, the majority of objects at all three sites are scrap, sheet, and unidentifiable metal pieces that are not reworked in any way and are not weapons or decorative pieces. Whether this indicates metal production and use strategies or is the result of sampling bias cannot be determined at this time. Expansion of this study to other contemporaneous sites in the region could aid in providing greater clarity to the significance of these findings.



## **NATIVE MASCULINITIES & THE WARRIOR'S USE OF COPPER: EXPLANATIONS FOR USE OF SCRAP METAL & AMULETS**

From the archaeological assemblages at the three sites it is evident that the Pequot were reworking and fashioning these metals into new forms. As aforementioned, at all three sites there is a high percentage, in relation to other known artifact forms and classes, of scrap and sheet metal. While this may be expected in a village setting where metal production and manufacture was likely occurring, to find scrap and sheet metal along a battle route may be particularly noteworthy as native men would presumably not have the time while fighting to be crafting new beads or other forms out of sheet metal. Similarly, the average dimensions of the scrap metal pieces found along the retreat route are smaller than those needed to fashion the average sized projectile point, if we assume that native fighters may be carrying scrap metal to create new weapons whilst fighting. This section will address this issue of why there exists a high percentage of sheet and scrap metal along the English Withdrawal by exploring reasons for the creation and carrying of scrap and sheet metal in military settings and for the use and wear of decorative and amulet pieces during times of war.

The first explanation presented for this phenomenon is that metallic jewelry, amulets, and scrap metal served as a reminder to native warriors of the reasons for which they were fighting. Although in previous sections of this analysis cuprous items were shown to have been highly valued objects to indigenous populations based upon their hue and cosmological associations, in military contexts it is possible that cuprous and ferrous objects held no discernible greater cosmological or spiritual meaning to native combatants other than as a symbol of their worldly possessions and physical well-being. William Wood (1764) recorded that before battle, in addition to painting their faces and bodies to disguise and terrify their enemies, native combatants would wear “their rich jewels, pendants and wamponpeage, to put them in mind they

fight not only for their children, wives, and lives, but likewise for their goods, lands and liberties” (104). By donning or carrying metallic pendants and scrap metal, Pequot warriors were wearing a physical manifestation of the liberty and wealth they stood to lose if a battle was lost. Decorative items, specifically bracelets, may also have been worn as a physical reminder of one’s survival and strength. When one was injured in instances of one-on-one combat, for example, the individual would typically place a bracelet on or around the injury. As one chronicler described this phenomena: “[. . .] they count it the greatest honor that can be to the surviving Cumbatant, to shew the scars of the wounds received in this kind of Conflict, and if it happen to be on the arme, [. . .], they will always weare a bracelet upon that place of the arme, as a trophy of honor to their dying day” (Morton 1883:154). Wearing copper scraps and decorative items would therefore serve as physical reminders and displays of one’s wealth and strength. Copper scrap and sheet metal may have thus been a type of symbol-laden jewelry.

In addition to serving as a reminder and symbol of the materiality of their freedoms and power, these metallic objects may have also been material representations of native masculinities. The metallic artifacts recovered from the three archaeological sites, and especially along the retreat route as they are situated within a singularly military context, may have held meaning to native participants as a method of creating and maintaining gender identity. For the indigenous groups of southern New England, native masculinity “[. . .] was something to be accomplished through exemplary deeds, physical distinction, and spiritual preeminence” (Romero 2006:282). To be a native man in seventeenth century indigenous society was to demonstrate one’s physical and spiritual strength in the face of adversity, such as when being tortured or during times of war. As Plymouth colony leader Edward Winslow noted, “A man is

not accounted a man till he do some notable act, or shew forth such courage and resolution as becometh his place” (Winslow 2014:109).

The elite warriors, or the Pnieses, were the epitome of native masculinity, and as some of the most highly regarded members of native society they exemplified the ideals and characteristics of manhood within their culture. Pnieses are described as being “one of the chiefest champions or men of valour” (Winslow 2014:63), men “of notable spirit” (Winslow 2014:94), and highly esteemed members of a sachem’s council “without whom they [the sachem] will not war or undertake any weighty business” (Winslow 2014:106). In the face of torture or death, the Pnieses fought until their last breathe and would not make any noise or show fear when wounded (Winslow 2014:94). Native masculinities thus placed a heavy emphasis on fighting, chivalry, and honor. This stoic, martial attitude can be juxtaposed against pacifist and acquisitive traits the Pequots associated with what they called women-like men, or men who placed higher value on making a profit than through exemplary deeds on the battlefield. “Although these be populous, yet I never heard they [Narragansett] were desirous to take in hand any martial enterprize, or expose themselves to the uncertain events of war: wherefore the Pequants call them women-like men” (Wood 1764:73). By placing greater emphasis on wampum production in lieu of warfare, the Pequots in this exchange appear to view the Narragansetts as effeminate (Romero 2006:312). In Pequot society, as demonstrated through the previous example, masculinity was defined primarily through notable deeds and warfare.

War was one avenue through which these masculinities could be expressed by showing one’s prowess, spiritual essence, and physical superiority or dexterity over others. Indigenous methods of battle focused on small-scale engagements that resulted in fewer casualties than European-style methods of warfare. “Their Warres are farre lesse bloody, and devouring then

the cruell Warres of *Europe*; and seldom twenty slaine in a pitcht field partly because when they in a wood every Tree is a Bucklar” (Williams 1643:180). Those that are killed, however, die as warriors and with honor, as when Roger Williams (1643) noted, “[. . .] and yet having no Swords nor Guns, all that are slaine are commonly slain with great Valour and Courage: for the Conquerour ventures into the thickest, and brings away the Head of his Enemy” (180-181). These “individuals or small-scale engagements, offer[ed] ample opportunity to test the martial skill and spiritual efficacy essential to Indian masculinity” (Romero 2006:298). Thus, battle proved to be a major method of demonstrating one’s masculinity to oneself and others.

In addition to warfare, another method in which one could demonstrate his/her masculinity was through the accumulation of spiritual power. A lack of spiritual power, or manitou, made one effeminate and unable to engage in male activities, such as warfare (Romero 2006:302). Copper in these contexts, as a material imbued with many underlying, spiritually-charged associations, would thus be an ideal proxy and charm to wear during battle to give one power over others. Additionally, its aforementioned healing properties make it an ideal object to be worn if one were to be injured during battle.

A third explanation for the number of scrap items and amulets recovered in military settings may be the result of a newfound urgency native peoples experienced to gain greater control over their lives, lands, and freedoms. Romero (2006), for example, suggests that in response to the arrival and settlement of Europeans, there was an intensification of religious practices in native communities (285). One of the many times that individuals or groups seek religion, or at least turn to magic and superstition, is during situations where there is danger and uncertainty (Malinowski 1992) or when people seek to control the uncontrollable. Pre-existing ideologies of metallic, and specifically copper, power in conjunction with a widely available raw

material source via European trade objects may have led to the rapid use, reworking, and repurposing of trade materials in an effort to solidify the grasp native communities had on a changing political, geographic, and economic landscape.

A final possible explanation for the use of scrap metal along the retreat route is that the valuation and meaning of copper was entangled within a mesh of indigenous social, political, and economic structures. Copper could at the same time be representative of power, wealth, and prestige while also being used for decorative and healing functions. Copper as an aforementioned changeable medium, resulting from its hue, linguistic derivations, and malleable, thin form, could easily transform and shift from one sphere of value to another. Thus an amalgamation of these posited theories could explain why these seemingly non-functional items were carried and worn during periods of battle.

By wearing metallic amulets and carrying scrap metal, native warriors may have been defining and enhancing their masculinity, manitou, and strength, while also showcasing their material wealth and individual agency to craft and recreate the “modern” European trade items into new items fitting their own ontologies and cultural structures. Cuprous and ferrous scrap and sheet metal in military settings thus potentially represent a slew of underlying meanings to native combatants to aid in their efforts to physically, spiritually, and symbolically subdue and defeat their enemies.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Studying the sociality of technology, specifically through the cultural biography of cuprous trade items, demonstrates the multidimensional roles material items play in people’s everyday lives. Objects not only have a social life, but they also reflect underlying relationships, cultural values, and information critical to understanding the underlying cultural reasons for a

society's past use and creation of material objects and structures. This article also highlights the active role native peoples possessed in their use and reuse of European trade objects, and notes the value system through which indigenous peoples conceived of copper prior to, during, and after European contact.

The trade objects that were being adopted and reused by southern New England indigenous groups were conceptualized and worn for a variety of possible reasons. These artifacts reflect native masculinities, cosmologies, and/or decorative arts. Similarly, the artifacts may be demonstrative of an entangled web of personal and community identity markers that dictated and helped showcase indigenous conceptualizations of personhood, warfare, or power. Regardless of the multiple reasons these individuals and cultural groups may have used and reused cuprous and ferrous trade items, their reworking demonstrated a degree both of cultural continuity, via the apparent similarity in value and object-creation before and after contact, and of social change, through the incorporation of new material mediums into their tool and decorative repertoire and an acknowledged (or unacknowledged) active choice to manipulate European objects into shapes and for functions to which they were not originally intended. These objects were not only crafted and conceptualized in domestic arenas, but actively taken onto battlefields and utilized in military contexts.

In the future, this research will delve further into these issues through studies with pXRF machines. Analyzing the compositional analysis of these metal artifacts can hopefully aid in determining the origin of these metals (be they forged in English or Dutch areas, which would in turn determine trade routes and the primary means through which indigenous groups of this region obtain trade items) and their intrinsic properties. Brass, the common medium through which trade items are crafted, fluctuate slightly in their properties (such as coloration) based

upon the amount of zinc mixed with copper. Through pXRF testing, it can be determined if certain artifact classes, such as projectile points or scrap metal, are purposefully chosen because they contain slightly different compositional and physical properties than other metallic objects.

Additionally, further testing and the inclusion of more artifact assemblages from Pequot War era indigenous settlements can aid in deciphering how reflective the current assemblage is from normal seventeenth century domestic contexts. This can, in turn, aid in understanding if certain sites, such as Calluna Hill, are typical of village settings or are the site of specialized metal production resulting from intensified war efforts.

## CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

Attempting to analyze the gender ideologies, roles, and institutions for a group of cultures can be challenging; it can be an especially daunting task when the only written primary sources from which to build hypotheses originate from a select group of men from an entirely different cultural background. What these Euroamerican chroniclers may have missed, misreported, or overlooked, however, can be found with supporting documentation and evidence in the archaeological and linguistic records. Using these lines of evidence, this thesis attempts to highlight additional, and possibly new, information on the gender dynamics of seventeenth century southern New England indigenous communities.

The seventeenth century was an era of difficulty and change for native societies in the northeast. From newfound diseases to rising tensions for land and access to trade networks, life was made increasingly more challenging when Europeans arrived in droves and attempted to lay claim to the New World. This arrival sparked a series of transformations in many native social systems, among them changes in burial practices (creation of collective cemeteries), trade alliances, and economic institutions. Gender roles and ideologies also shifted as a result of European contact, and this gradual transformation can be detected in the mortuary record through individual grave good assemblages. The first article, which focused on the burial remains, traditions, and gender systems of southern New England tribal nations, argued that there are two explanations for the unique burial assemblages at the RI-1000 and Marblehead cemeteries. At each cemetery, one burial contained an individual with grave goods that were strongly associated with a combination of items that are generally only exclusively associated with either males or females (i.e., smoking pipes, weapons, pestles, hoes). One proposed explanation suggests that the mixed male-female gendered grave goods are demonstrative of two-spirit existence in the



northeastern region. Despite a lack of supporting scholarly or historical evidence, the information generated in this article suggests that silence and minimal information does not equate to non-existence.

The second explanation for the burial assemblages argues that these interred items are representative of changing gender roles wrought by the arrival of Europeans. From changing gender roles and socioeconomic duties (men overtaking the role of caretaker of the land) to increased agency and freedom to utilize previously withheld cultural items (women with access to smoking pipes), the two burial assemblages from RI-1000 and Marblehead aid in demonstrating that one hundred years of history saw gradual yet stark changes in indigenous social structures.

The second article, while also occurring in a period of changing political and economic climates in the early seventeenth century, focuses more on cultural continuity, perseverance, and resistance. This article studied the life history of copper and analyzed how copper trade items are repurposed by native individuals. These highly valued cuprous metals are crafted into new objects out of traded European commodities. Prior to contact, copper possessed a long history of use and meaning to many indigenous populations in the New World. After contact, these once difficult to obtain mediums are readily available in the form of European trade objects. Despite its ease of procurement post-contact, cuprous metals continue to be highly valued for their intrinsic properties, such as hue, cosmological associations, and healing qualities. Upon trading, these metals are physically or mentally manipulated (revalued and conceptualized) to fit into an existing and enduring native ideology and tradition. This ‘modern’ Western brass technology is thus indigenized and given new life and meaning in native society.

Aside from the scrap and decorative pieces crafted from these repurposed trade objects, weapons, such as projectile points, are also created. These weapons are eventually used against the people who first traded and gave the objects to indigenous communities—the Europeans. Therefore, in addition to symbolically resisting European influences through the reworking of trade objects, Europeans are physically resisted through the act of war. By studying the metallic artifact assemblage from three archaeological contexts during the Pequot War (1636-1637), copper scrap pieces in military settings were found to represent, or at least reflect, native masculinities and spirituality in the hyper-masculinized arena of the battlefield. The battlefield was one of the main areas in which a man could showcase his power, strength, and manitou. With the aid of metallic, and particularly cuprous, scrap and other associated objects, the warrior could fight with a healing, spiritually charged substance on his person that could protect himself from physical or spiritual injury.

This research has hopefully added additional information and provided a starting point for other lines of inquiry into the gender systems and livelihoods of southern New England indigenous populations. With further research, by expanding sample sizes and incorporating additional lines of analysis, such as studies with pXRF machines, more information can be generated and more definitive conclusions can be drawn.

## APPENDIX A

The original coding schema for burial data included the following variables:

### Categorical Variables:

**Sex** (9 = not known or no data; 1 = male; 2 = female)

**Age** (0 = 0 to 3 or four [3/4] years old/Neonatal; 1 = 3/4 to 11/12 years old/Subadult; 2 = 12/13 to 30 years old/Adult; 3 = 30 to 50 years old; 4 = over fifty years old; 9 = no data)

**Site** (1 = Long Pond; 2 = West Ferry; 3 = RI-1000)

### Presence/Absence Variables:

**Rings**

**Bottles**

**Spoons or Spoon Handles**

**Shell Beads, Pendants, Cores, or Earrings**

**Ritualized Objects**

**Bone, Bone Beads, or Animal Teeth**

**Metal Kettle, Skillet, or Measuring Vessel**

**Weapon (Gun, Gunflint, Arrowhead, Tomahawk, or Sword/Rapier)**

**Pipe**

**Glass Beads**

**Necklace, Bracelet or Locket**

**Aboriginal Pottery, Clay Ball or Pottery Beads**

**Pestle**

**Iron Nails or Iron Nail Fragments**

**Iron Knife, Axe, Chisel, Pintle, Bails, Spike or Sawblade**

**Iron Horseshoe or Spurs**

**Iron Wampum Drills or Awls**

**Iron Hooks, Keys, Chains or Locks**

**Iron Scissors or Rods**

**Matting, Wool, Organic Material or Textiles**

**Brass/Copper Beads or Scraps or Knife Handles**

**Quartz or Other Stone**

**Charcoal**

**Ochre**

**Copper Coin or Medallion**

**Wood, Leather, or Wood Mirror Box**

**Iron Hoe**

**Headband**

**Button or Button Mold**

**Iron Cup or Container Fragments**

**Graphite**

**Glass Mirror**

**Iron or Brass Buckle**

**Graphite Stones to Make Black Paint**

**Whetstone or Abrader**

**Breastplate or Breast Ornament**  
**Apothecary Jar**  
**Iron Swivel**  
**Brass Hawk's Bells**  
**Glass**  
**Cup or Box Fragments**  
**Brass/Bone/Wood Comb or Hair Ornament**  
**Glass/Metal Disk**  
**Plates or Bowls**  
**Belt**  
**Wampum or Wampum Belt**  
**Skin/Birch Bark Bag or Seeds**  
**Stone Tools**

## APPENDIX B

The modified coding schema for burial data included the following variables:

### Categorical Variables:

**Sex** (9 = not known or no data; 1 = male; 2 = female)

**Age** (0 = 0 to 3 or four [3/4] years old/Neonatal; 1 = 3/4 to 11/12 years old/Subadult; 2 = 11/12 to 30 years old/Adult; 3 = 30 to 50 years old; 4 = over fifty years old; 9 = no data)

**Site** (1 = Long Pond; 2 = West Ferry; 3 = RI-1000)

### Presence/Absence Variables:

**Rings**

**Bottles**

**Spoons or Spoon Handles**

**Shell Beads, Pendants, Cores, or Earrings**

**Metal Kettle, Skillet, or Measuring Vessel**

**Weapon (Gun, Gunflint, Arrowhead, Tomahawk, or Sword/Rapier)**

**Pipe**

**Glass Beads**

**Necklace, Bracelet or Locket**

**Pestle**

**Iron Nails or Iron Nail Fragments**

**Iron Knife, Axe, Chisel, Pintle, Bails, Spike or Sawblade**

**Iron Scissors or Rods**

**Matting, Wool, Organic Material or Textiles**

**Brass/Copper Beads or Scraps or Knife Handles**

**Iron Hoe**

**Iron Cup or Container Fragments**

**Whetstone or Abrader**

**Breastplate or Breast Ornament**

**Wampum or Wampum Belt**

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