An Archaeology of Redress
Freedom as Impossible Praxis

Justin Dunnavant and Ayana Omilade Flewellen

Black studies critical theorizations have much to offer the field of archaeology both in theory and in practice. For Saidiya Hartman, redress entails confronting formations of epistemic violence that undergird the archival record; it is a praxis that is always incomplete. This article maps Hartman's theory of redress onto the practice of community archaeology to explore the opportunities and challenges that arise when archaeologists center youth engagement, capacity building, and cultural and natural heritage stewardship. Using the Estate Little Princess Archaeology Project as a case study, we explore one way archaeologists attempt to offer restitution to the issues their work reveals (i.e., legacies of environmental racism, truncated avenues of economic sustainability, racialized disenfranchisement) through an "archaeology of redress."

Introduction

Five decades ago, Fritz and Plog (1970) wrote that "unless archaeologists find ways to make their research increasingly relevant to the modern world, the modern world will find itself increasingly capable of getting along without archaeologists" (412). Fritz and Plog's provocative call that archaeologists make their work "relevant to the modern world" lays the foundation of an archaeological praxis dedicated to community collaboration, engagement, and empowerment (Atalay 2010; d'Alpoim Guedes, Gonzalez, and Rivera-Collazo 2021; Fong et al. 2022; LaRoche 2011; LaRoche and Blakey 1997; Marshall 2002; McDavid 1997, 2004, 2007; Tully 2007). The relevance of archaeology—the very sustainability of the field—resides in how scholars collaborate and work alongside communities that are connected and impacted by the archaeological work being conducted.

The social climate of the 1970s and 1980s set the backdrop of Fritz and Plog's provocation. During this time, women around North America demanded social equality to their male counterparts, while faculty and students of African descent called for more racially inclusive campuses, courses, and scholarship. Native Americans—who long saw their sacred sites decimated by shovels and trowels—advocated for the passage of the Iowa Burials Protection Act of 1976, the predecessor of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). This time ripe with social movements, they permeated the social sciences, whereby archaeologists began to question the relevance of their scholarship to the larger society (Franklin and Paynter 2010).

This article builds on the scholarship of Black studies theorists, community-based participatory research, community-engaged archaeology, and public archaeology to posit that the sustainability of the field of archaeology—its relevance in the modern world—cannot be disentangled from the sustainability of the communities impacted by the archaeological work conducted. In communities tied to historical injustices—specifically those more vulnerable because of their social location—archaeological praxis requires tending to legacies of inequity; it requires redress. Using the Estate Little Princess Archaeological Project (ELPAP) as a case study, this article outlines the praxis for an "archaeology of redress," which attempts to offer redress for the social and natural environmental issues it exposes through rigorous research and intentional action.

Archaeology of Redress Foundations

We first publicly explored the idea of an archaeology of redress as the major theme of a Wenner-Gren Foundation virtual series "From the Margins to the Mainstream: Black and Indigenous Futures in Archaeology." The panel, titled "The Archaeology of Redress and Restorative Justice," featured Black and Indigenous archaeologists and heritage professionals who collectively spoke about the ways their work, and archaeology more generally, is uniquely poised to contribute to the present-day conversations of restorative justice around heritage, environmental racism, and Indian Residential Schools in Canada (Wenner-Gren Foundation 2020). However, iterations of community-based archaeology have been attributed to feminist studies (Spector 1993), Indigenous studies (Atalay 2006, 2012; Silliman 2008),

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and Marxist theory (Moshenska 2018; Wurst and Mrozowski 2014). As the area of community archaeology continues to grow, there has been a proliferation of journals (*Public Archaeology*, *Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage*) and edited volumes (e.g., Little and Shackel 2007; McGuire 2008; Merriman 2004; Shackel and Chambers 2004) dedicated to the subject. The shape and texture of community archaeology can take many different forms. Our conceptualization of archaeology of redress expands on archaeological scholarship centered on community-based participatory research, community-engaged archaeology, and Indigenous archaeology and draws in Black critical theorists. It is necessary to provide a brief overview of these theoretical frameworks to illuminate the intellectual genealogy on which an archaeology of redress stands.

Following the call for archaeologists to build more collaborative relations with Native American groups, increased attention was brought to how other populations were unjustly treated within the field, particularly African Americans (LaRoche and Blakey 1997; Mathis and Weik 2004; McGhee 2012). LaRoche and Blakey (1997) contended that the treatment of burial remains for non-White populations reflected how their descendants were presently racialized and continue to be subjected to displacement, economic exploitation, and environmental racism.

However, engagement with descendants is not a simple process. Yvonne Marshall (2002), in her seminal article "What is Community Archaeology?," argues that the hallmark of community archaeology is the distribution of control of archaeological projects to local communities. LaRoche and Blakey (1997) point to how the New York African Burial Ground Project brought together several different communities, academics, and a slew of stakeholders that varied in religious affiliations, class, and gender, claiming some degree of responsibility as to the future of those remains and the site. In another context, added complexity arose when African Americans claiming Indigenous ties were not afforded the same acknowledgment under NAGPRA (Mathis and Terry 2004).[1] In the interim, the call has been made to consider the repatriation of African American ancestral remains (Dunnavant, Justinvil, and Colwell 2021) and projects like Antoinette Jackson's (2021) Black Cemetery Network are working to provide a list of known cemetery sites and offer resources to those interested in preserving these often neglected spaces.

To understand how archaeology can be activated to grapple with contemporary issues of community engagement and memory loss, Gonzalez et al. (2006) used the term "low-impact archaeology." Working with the Kashaya Pomo Interpretive Trail Project (KPITP) at the Fort Ross site in California, they developed the concept of "low-impact archaeology" as a means of "documenting and recovering tribal histories for future generations" (Gonzalez 2016:539). Low-impact archaeology mitigates the destructive nature of archaeology on cultural landscapes and develops a practice of archaeological research "grounded in respect" (Gonzalez 2016:534). The impacts of archaeology for some archaeologists and communities affected by archaeological work are physical and, in certain contexts, can also be spiritual. Thus, the KPITP introduced local youth to their heritage and the potential ethical issues with archaeology and provided an opportunity for visitors to learn about the Kashaya Pomo at a site traditionally centered on Russian American history. Gonzalez et al. (2006) draw inspiration from Waziyatawin Wilson's (2004) articulation that decolonial practice is about not only dismantling colonial structures and mentalities but also actively reversing them.

The implementation of low-impact archaeology varies by the context and needs of the community. In the case of the KPITP, low-impact archaeology involved ethnographic surveys, "capture-and-release" surface collection strategies, geophysical surveys, and minimal ground disturbance. The "capture-and-release" process included the careful pedestrian survey and sampling of only a small number of surface collections from a few sites and then a more extensive shovel test survey across the sites. Following the excavations of shovel test units, the artifacts were analyzed over several years before the shovel tests were relocated, the sod peeled back, and the artifacts reinterred. Kashaya ceremony prepared the sites for the reinternment of the ancestral belongings. This method alleviates much of the disturbance and reduces the necessity of curation in perpetuity, as artifacts are all eventually returned to the land.

Our conceptualization of an archaeology of redress closely aligns with an archaeology for the seventh generation. To echo Gonzalez et al. (2006), "To simply study colonialism or repatriate knowledge of tribal traditions back to communities misses the point: this is not scholarship for the sake of scholarship but scholarship in aid of the community" (391). Their essay "Archaeology of the Seventh Generation" articulates an archaeological praxis whereby "archaeology for the seventh generation, then, is concerned with not only the next seven generations of archaeologists but also Indian people and their cultural heritage. It is an archaeology that seeks not just common ground but sustainability and longevity of cultural integrity and vitality" (397). When we center youth education, the effects of archaeological research extend beyond the field season and alter communities' perceptions of cultural and natural heritage.

We locate an archaeology of redress in the fertile grounds of a justice-oriented standpoint rooted in the discipline of Black studies, which centers on the production of knowledge being rooted in addressing social injustice in order to create liberatory futures for the communities we work in (Battle-Baptiste 2011:31). Black studies as a discipline, similar to Indigenous studies, is built on a decolonial praxis rooted in justice-oriented scholarship dedicated to not only studying the African diaspora past and present—conscripted by the horrors of the transatlantic slave trade—but also conceiving of liberatory futures for African-descendent peoples (Battle-Baptiste 2011; Flewellen et al. 2021; Franklin et al. 2020; Gordon 2007). However, scholars

1. Recent efforts led by the Society for Historical Archaeology are attempting to pass federal legislation for recognizing, documenting, and protecting African American historic burial grounds (US African-American Burial Grounds Network Act S. 2827, 2019–2020).

have articulated how the institutionalization of Black studies has taken it away from its liberatory roots as it has been co-opted by the academy (Harney and Moten 2013; Marable 2000; Myers 2022; Wynter 2006). Within this vein, Katherine McKittrick (2014) urges Black studies to analyze past and present acts of anti-Black violence and actively work toward identifying and interrogating other possibilities of Black life. With this standpoint at the foundation of an archaeology of redress, scholars cannot disentangle the sustainability of the communities impacted by the archaeological work we do from the scholarship we produce. This is more readily seen within the work of the ELPAP and our youth field school, which is discussed in-depth below.

If we are to take this call seriously as scholars working in the African diaspora and studying the era of slavery, we must also seriously take charge of countering some of colonialism's negative impacts on the lives of people and the environment. This is the epistemic motivation of an archaeology of redress generally and what we believe should be more specifically at the heart of African diaspora archaeology. The impacts of archaeological work on the environment are more often explicitly taken up in cultural resource management (CRM) projects that have to provide environmental assessments to governmental agencies; however, this has left the baseline for discussions regarding archaeology's environmental impact in the rhetoric of compliance, which has proven lackluster overtime (Dickens et al. 1982). Relatively little scholarship has been produced that outlines the environmental impact of archaeological work as an inheritance of colonialism, with the exception of a few (Gonzalez et al. 2006; Marek-Martinez 2021). Furthermore, archaeologists rarely acknowledge and mitigate how excavations and archaeological surveys serve as a continuation of environmental degradation that falls within the legacy of settler-colonial land extraction. For archaeologists doing work at sites of enslavement and the afterlives of slavery, we must contend with the materiality of the "afterlife of slavery" (Hartman 2008*a*) while also contending with the biophysical afterlife of slavery, pulling from the work of Tianna Bruno (2023), which makes itself known in the ways the landscape registers the impact of slavery within soil composition, coral reef degradation (Flewellen 2025*b*), and deforestation (Bruno 2023).

Conceptualizing an Archaeology of Redress

Archaeologists who study the African diaspora have developed concepts akin to an archaeology of redress, primarily through the lens of vindicationist scholarship (Mullins 2008). The work of vindicationist archaeology for Mullins and others (Bell 2008; Brandon 2008) is primarily rooted in the practice of countering racist, truncated historical narratives of the past by illuminating the multiplicity of African diaspora identity formations and experiences. Vindicationist work within African diaspora archaeology is born from a legacy of scholarship produced by Black scholars throughout the twentieth century, such as W. E. B. Du Bois, who were determined to create avenues of knowledge production that did not reify the dehumanization of African and African-descendant people (Foster 1997). While this work is noble in that it is rooted in countering the production of anti-Black scholarship, its theorizations within the field do not move beyond interpretive archaeological frameworks. In other words, vindicationist scholarship in archaeology has concerned itself with how interpretations of the past and present lived experiences of Blackness are disseminated, mainly in academic settings, but not necessarily the livelihoods of those people being studied in the present.

Archaeology has the ability and needs to do social justice work, particularly with communities that have been victims of past atrocities (Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2007). Archaeologists have the ability to raise collective consciousness around inequity (Mullins 2007) and promote the demands and desires of the communities where they work. Similarly, Paul Shackel (2007:247–248) asserts that archaeology can engage in critical analyses of race and racism in the past and present, explore issues of diversity, build multicultural organizations, and work toward refashioning a "color-conscious" history rather than one that is colorblind.

An archaeology of redress builds on this activist-oriented scholarship, going one step further by requiring that archaeologists take a serious charge to offer some form of retribution, no matter how small, for the violence or inequality that is revealed. While archaeologists cannot be expected to tackle such large and deep-rooted issues, they can participate in forms of redress by "participating in the identification of massacre victims, telling the stories of those whose past was erased, or bringing resolution among different people still in conflict" (Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2007:39).

An archaeology of redress concerns itself not only with the ways anti-Blackness, as a by-product of colonialism, permeates archaeological scholarship on the African diaspora but how those same processes have come to shape the social livelihoods of those descendant and stakeholder communities as well as the natural environment they live in. This is particularly salient in marginalized communities that have been negatively impacted by histories of colonialism and historically excluded from archaeological project designs, implementation, and dissemination of archaeological research. Once this is clear, archaeologists can shift toward an understanding of how communities can most effectively use the tools of archaeology to address local needs. That is the goal of an archaeology of redress.

From Identifying to Enacting Redress

Discussions of redress for the woes of slavery have historically been a topic of discussion among slavery abolitionists and, more recently, reparations advocates (Coates 2014; Douglass 1857). Stephen Best and Saidiya Hartman (2005) situate one of the most salient claims for redress. Best and Hartman elaborate on this framing with the work of Ottobah Cugoano in his 1787 text, *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evils of Slavery*. They focus on Cugoano's (1999 [1787]) assertion that the nobility of Britain

must enact "a just commutation for what cannot be fully restored, in order to make a restoration, as far as could be, for the injuries already done to [enslaved Africans]" (102). How do we begin to conceptualize redress for a crime that can never fully be commuted?

Within the realm of archival science, Saidiya Hartman lays out a methodology of redress that compels scholars of slavery to reflect on the impact of their research. In her essay, "Venus in Two Acts," Hartman (2008*b*) articulates redress as a method of reading against, alongside, and through archives on the transatlantic slave trade. She states that her goal with this method works at "redressing the violence that produced numbers, ciphers, and fragments of discourse" (3). The result of this redressive method of surveying and interpreting historical material is needed in order to produce scholarship that does not replicate dehumanization that is built into the historiography of the transatlantic slave trade. Hartman attempts to counter the epistemic violence inherent in the archive of the transatlantic slave trade to locate the lived experiences of Black women without reifying the violence that situates them in relative obscurity in the archival record. Redress, she goes on to articulate, works to produce scholarship that does not leave Black women dismembered in the archive and, as a result, represented as dismembered in the present, yet it ultimately is an "impossible" task (Hartman 2008*b*:2–3). Hartman (2008*b*) asks the reader, "How does one rewrite the chronicle of a death foretold and anticipated as a collective biography of dead subjects, as a counter-history of the human, as a practice of freedom?" (3). This "practice of freedom" is predicated on countering the violence of colonialism, which birthed a collection of primary documents that silence the experiences of Black peoples, positioning them as "a collective biography of dead subjects." This quest is for a "practice of freedom" that illuminates the life, not the death, of Black bodies. However, the question remains as to whether such a practice is possible. For Hartman, the quest toward redress to counter violences of the past is too grand, and in the end, the "flashes" of life given to historical characters do not change their often horrid fate. Yet, as Hartman reminds us, it is work that needs to be done, and in this way, the attempt itself is where success lies.

Hartman's conceptualization of "redress" is valid within our framework of an archaeology of redress. Within the framework of African diaspora archaeology in the United States, we often work at sites of enslavement and freedom, where the historical characters that occupied those sites were subjected to the horrors of enslavement, countless waves of economic disenfranchisement, and violent practices of gendered racialization. Archaeologists work with a material record that is often interpreted as a chronicle of a death foretold and anticipated, as Africans and their descendants lived in a plantocracy based on necropolitics (Mbembé 2003; McKittrick 2006). Artifacts recovered from these sites are weighed, counted, and analyzed for their attributes. These data are then compiled into databases that produce "numbers, ciphers, and fragments of discourse" that can reproduce forms of epistemic violence in the archaeological record, mirroring the archival record that Hartman references (Flewellen 2020; McKittrick 2016). An archaeology of redress requires us to understand not only the cultural knowledge that has been lost, displaced, and destroyed but also the ways in which communities actively made life, maintained and altered cultural practices, and created new practices to sustain life. Furthermore, as historical archaeologists, we are cognizant of the fact that the processes of colonialism are dynamic, at times requiring us to analyze past processes as well as present processes. An archaeology of redress attempts the "impossible" task of reckoning in the wake of slavery (see Sharpe 2016) to create a praxis that counters these forms of epistemic violence by rooting in the needs of descendant and stakeholder communities as well as the environments where they live, as a "practice of freedom."

While the idea of offering redress for the woes of slavery is beyond the capabilities of archaeology, as archaeologists who study the transatlantic slave trade era, we can offer a small drop in the ocean of redress through the methodological and theoretical tools of the discipline. Traditional notions of redress have been articulated in very homocentric terms—that is, focusing on redress to humans in social, economic, and political terms. A more comprehensive understanding of redress must encompass not only those ills of slavery that have been done to African-descendent people but also a more planetary approach that includes damages to the environment and other species as well. Thus, our notion of an archaeology of redress takes seriously the relationships between archaeology and a commitment to community engagement, capacity building, and consideration for the cultural as well as the natural environment. As scholars studying the period of slavery, we feel a responsibility to not only identify the legacies of slavery but also offer some sort of redress to the situations we did not create but find ourselves in.

The implementation of an archaeology of redress varies based on local contexts. However, there are four tenants that lay at the foundation (fig. 1). First, we understand that community stakeholders are partners in the formation of the research design. This is in line with advanced practices of community-based archaeology and is critical if archaeological research and praxis are to align with local needs. Second, we understand that archaeological excavations impact the local environment, and therefore it is important to mitigate this environmental disturbance when possible. The clearing of brush for survey, grading soil for excavation, and extracting of archaeological material all introduce disturbances to the local environment. Third, we understand that cultural and natural heritage stewardship are inextricably linked. Anderson and Atalay (2023:8) remind us that "repatriation of ancestral remains, traveling items, seeds, and other Indigenous 'relations' and cultural materials that connect to land and life are essential for decolonization." As we prepare students to explore, interpret, and understand the many dimensions of cultural heritage stewardship, we must prepare students to have the same level of care for the natural heritage. Epistemologically, this requires centering both cultural and natural heritage stewardship together and at times may require additional time and attention to tease out the connection and ensure that both are treated with an ethic of care. Finally, an archaeology of redress requires

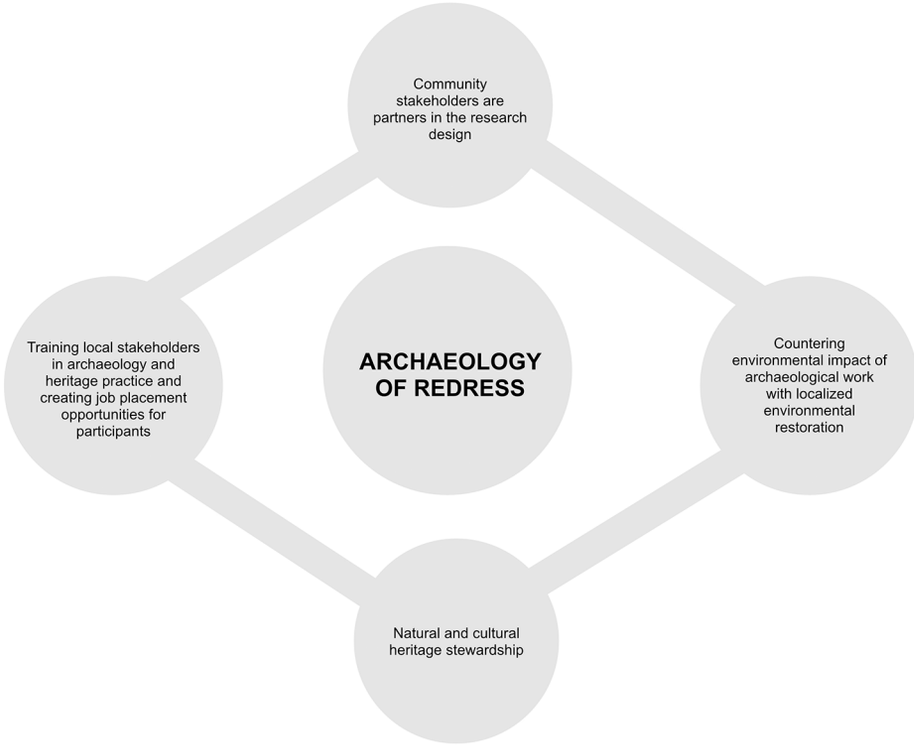

Figure 1. Model of an archaeology of redress.

training local stakeholders to the best of our ability so that they can lead and direct their own stewardship initiatives. When possible, this can lead to job placement opportunities, as one of our goals is to train our replacements. We understand that they will be responsible for asking the questions and exploring the challenges that we cannot yet conceive.

In an ideal world, an archaeology of redress will adequately consider all of these components, but we understand that local circumstances may create opportunities for certain avenues and inhibit other possibilities. This should not hinder one from attempting an archaeology of redress. We recognize that this iteration of an archaeology of redress was created out of a need to develop a praxis of archaeological research based on our experiences working throughout the African diaspora and that notions of redress will differ in other contexts.

Redress as Praxis

An archaeology of redress will often require a slower approach to archaeological work, building on William Caraher's (2013) call for a "slow archaeology." For Caraher (2013), slowing down the process of fieldwork, such as implementing detailed pedestrian survey techniques and "attentive" daily recordkeeping, is a practice rooted in the "craft" of archaeology that can lead to in-depth discoveries. While Caraher is primarily concerned with practices of fieldwork (survey and excavation) and logistics leading up to fieldwork, an archaeology of redress also concerns itself with slowing down the process of research design and implementation. An archaeology of redress weaves community engagement practices and environmental awareness with Caraher's concept of slow archaeology to produce a new tapestry of praxis within the discipline. Thus, in calling for an archaeology of redress, we are calling for a change in the fundamental practice of archaeological research. There is no streamlined process within the archaeology of redress. Each project is localized to match the unique needs of communities and environments impacted by archaeological work. As a result, which will be highlighted in the case study below, the goals of an archaeology of redress often run counter to the "high productivity in compressed time frames," to pull from Alison Mountz et al. (2015), seen for both archaeologists practicing within academic settings and those in CRM. As work at the Estate Little Princess, discussed below, will demonstrate, archaeology of redress requires a slowing down so that archaeologists can be in a practice of attentiveness that addresses the needs of impacted communities and the environment before a shovel or trowel breaks ground. In the following section, we outline our attempt at an archaeology of redress as practiced at ELPAP.

Case Study: An Archaeology of Redress in Ay Ay (St. Croix)

In 2015, representatives of Diving with a Purpose (DWP)—a community-focused, nonprofit organization dedicated to the

conservation and protection of submerged heritage resources—contacted the Society of Black Archaeologists (SBA) regarding a possible collaboration with the Slave Wrecks Project (SWP) to facilitate a maritime and terrestrial archaeology program for Crucian youth. After a year of planning and several assessment trips to St. Croix, a joint maritime and terrestrial archaeology field school was established. Since 2014, SWP organizers have been building partnerships in the community to set up potential projects on the island. In 2016, before any shovels broke ground or a permit to excavate was signed, community meetings hosted by the SWP were held with museum officials, local organizations, community stakeholders, National Park Service (NPS) representatives, and archaeologists from the SBA. These meetings were held to assess the needs of the community, specifically around cultural heritage resources. A number of projects have come to fruition on St. Croix under the umbrella of the SWP, one such project being ELPAP.

The Estate Little Princess was established by Danish governor Frederik Moth in 1749 to operate primarily as a sugar plantation (Dunnavant et al. 2018; Flewellen 2020; Flewellen et al. 2018, 2020; fig. 2). Over the years, the plantation estate expanded to accommodate a growing enslaved population, and new structures were added as the production of sugar and rum shifted from wind to steam power. As with other plantations and historic buildings on the islands, many of the structures were fashioned with a combination of lime and coral tabby excavated from the nearby seafloor. One historical account of coral mining from the colonial period outlines this extractive practice. The process involved two sets of canoes. One group would canoe out to the reef and, brandishing large, thick wooden sticks, would proceed to break up the coral heads. A second canoe of divers would meet them, diving to collect the loosed coral. Once the canoe was loaded, they would return to shore and repeat the process (Haagensen 1994 [1758]).

While the extent to which coral mining occurred has yet to be quantified, there is a clear connection between the environmental degradation that occurred on land and underwater. Sugar remained the primary commodity, but the ground provisions were also cultivated to varying degrees. At its height in 1771, the estate counted 141 enslaved individuals and encompassed 200 acres of land (Dunnavant et al. 2018, 2019, 2020).

After the 1848 abolition of slavery in St. Croix, the plantation continued to operate with low-wage labor. The plantation started to fall into disrepair during the first half of the twentieth century with the general decline of sugar production on the island. In 1949, 200 years after its initial inception as a sugar plantation, the estate was sold to Clayton and Opal Shoemaker as a summer home. In 1980 the estate was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (Wright, Lader, and Chapman 1980) and was willed to the Nature Conservancy (TNC) in 1991 after the death of the Shoemakers. Today, the primary structures of the estate sit on 25 acres of land administered by TNC, currently serving as the regional headquarters.

The initial focus of ELPAP was to introduce secondary school–aged youth to the field of archaeology.[2] To this end, ELPAP combined one week of terrestrial archaeology and oral history training with scuba diving certification and training to expose them to the rigors of archaeological fieldwork. To ensure the success of the program, the authors dedicated a year of travel and networking solely to establish meaningful connections with key community members and organizations.

Excavations began in the summer of 2017, with the goal of understanding the extent of the enslaved living quarters at the estate. Before excavations began, our intentions were set with a pouring of libations, officiated by Dr. Chenzira Davis-Kahina, then director of the Virgin Islands Caribbean Cultural Center. These libations were meant as an acknowledgment of the people who were enslaved and labored at the plantation as well as the Indigenous people who were the first stewards of the land, displaced by genocide and colonialism.

Youth Training at the Estate of Little Princess

A youth training component of ELPAP was built into the fabric of the project's research design from its inception. Representatives from the Caribbean Center for Boys and Girls (CCBG), then known as the Boys and Girls Club of St. Croix, expressed a desire to have local youth involved in cultural heritage preservation programming that sparked from the collaborations across the island under the umbrella of the SWP. SBA archaeologists, in collaboration with the CCBG, contracted Dr. Alexandra Jones, CEO and founder of Archaeology in the Community (AITC), to provide free educational programming for youth on the island through ELPAP. Every archaeological field season at the Estate Little Princess has included a one-week youth training component funded by the SWP. This one-week field school provides youth from the CCBG exposure to archaeological methods and theory.

According to the AITC training program agenda, students spend five days learning the basics of Crucian history, archaeological methodology, excavation techniques, and artifact analysis through classroom and hands-on instruction. The final day of the field school is spent with cultural heritage professionals on the island to learn about further education and job prospects. Each year, student participants are given a pre- and postevaluation, which allows AITC to assess learning outcomes among participants. In addition to completing student evaluations, each student participates in a postinterview allowing AITC to document student learning outcomes over time.

The inaugural terrestrial archaeology field season and youth training field school launched in the summer of 2017. A total of 43 Crucian students participated in the youth training component

2. This is not the first archaeological project to develop with the explicit intention of youth education. Agbe-Davies's (2002, 2010) work in Springfield, Bermuda, was built around an archaeology day camp for youths 11–15 years old.

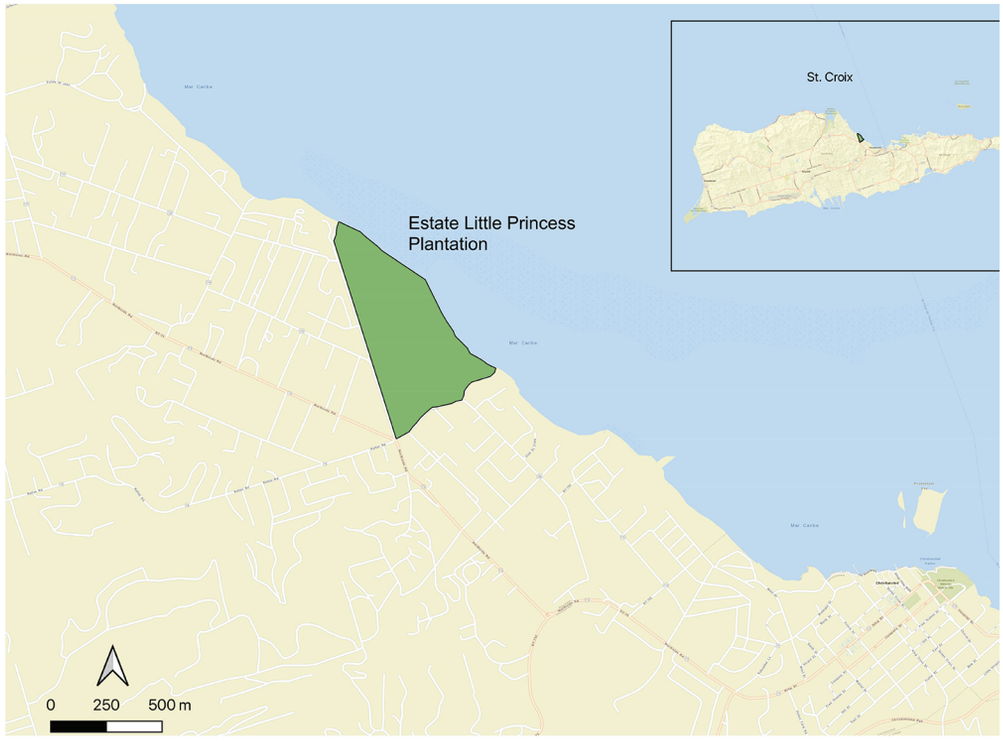

Figure 2. Map of the Estate Little Princess in St. Croix, US Virgin Islands.

of the Estate Little Princess project from 2017 to 2019. During the 2018 and 2019 field seasons, returning students to the field school were provided the opportunity to serve as interns through AITC. These returning students assisted AITC coordinators, teaching their peers techniques they learned from previous field seasons while receiving a stipend for their labor. Through our youth field school in partnership with AITC, we see the importance of not disentangling the sustainability of the communities impacted by the archaeological work we produce from the scholarship we produce. One of the core requests made by community members on St. Croix with regard to future archaeological work on the island was providing work and job placement opportunities for youth. By providing youth with minor stipends for this labor, we demonstrated our commitment to the needs of community members, which has led to an outpouring of support for the longevity of the project. This example also demonstrates that archaeological endeavors are intricately tied to the support, engagement, and collaboration of the communities impacted by our work.

In addition to students participating in a terrestrial archaeology field school, programming was initially created by DWP to introduce youth on the island to scuba diving and maritime archaeology. Besides the challenges in locating an appropriate shipwreck for the training, there was a growing concern that student participants would need basic swimming and dive training to obtain the necessary skills to participate in a DWP maritime archaeology advocacy program. Toward the latter half of 2016, plans shifted to focus on creating the infrastructure for youth to receive basic swimming and diving skills. While St. Croix is surrounded by the Atlantic and heralded as one of the top dive locations in the world for its clear waters and thriving coral reefs, the recreational dive industry on the island is predominantly composed of Americans from the mainland United States. At the onset of the maritime training program, we did not encounter any Crucians employed in the dive industry on the island. For many Crucians, economic and social barriers prohibit diving as a recreational activity or educational pursuit.

To initiate the scuba training component of the field school, DWP contacted Junior Scientists in the Sea (JSIS). JSIS has been working with youth from the CCBG since the summer of 2017, providing free year-round programming that teaches youth on the island swimming and scuba training. Since 2017, JSIS has certified several students from the CCBG as both open-water and advanced open-water PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) divers. Plans are still ongoing to develop a youth DWP training component, while JSIS has built collaborations with the local Nature Conservancy and the Mote Marine Lab in Florida to provide training in marine sciences.

Since 2017, youth from the CCBG have received training in both scuba diving and terrestrial archaeology. Many students have found avenues for economic access based on their participation in the terrestrial and maritime programs—be it paid internships with AITC, Greening Youth Foundation, Youth Conservation Corps, NPS, or employment at local dive shops. Beyond tangible pathways of economic access created for youth, the sense of cultural stewardship produced was documented in exit interviews conducted by AITC that demonstrate how, for many of the student participants, their field school experience

was the first intimate engagement with a plantation on the island as a space that holds not only traumatic histories but also the potential to offer a sense of self and community empowerment. After the first year of the program, ELPAP won the Society for Historical Archaeology's Gender and Minority Affairs Committee Diversity Field School Award for commitment to diversity in historical archaeology. Youth programming on the island is ongoing; the opportunities afforded to students, born out of collaborations with local community stakeholders, have laid the foundation for a renewed interest in maritime and terrestrial cultural and environmental stewardship on the island.

Training HBCU Students at the Estate of Little Princess

On the basis of the success of the youth training component, project coordinators explored the possibility of extending training to university-level students. In an effort to build the capacity of archaeologists of African descent, we recognized the importance of offering a comparable program to university students. Thus, the UC-HBCU initiative was born.

The UC-HBCU Internship in African Diaspora Archaeology, funded by the University of California's (UC's) Office of the President, began in earnest in the summer of 2017 as a collaborative grant between ELPAP in St. Croix and the Milot Archaeology Project in Haiti. The program was designed to introduce students from historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to the field of archaeology in light of the fact that the discipline of archaeology has had great difficulty recruiting and retaining students of color (Brunache et al. 2021; Franklin 1997; Jones and Carey 2023; Labode 2009; Lee 2004; Melnick, Roberts, and McGilvray 2021; Roberts 2020*b*). Furthermore, most HBCUs lack programs in anthropology and, by extension, opportunities for the students to gain exposure to archaeology—either in the classroom or through field school opportunities. Funding for the program was provided by the UC's Office of the President's UC-HBCU Initiative, with Dr. J. Cameron Monroe conceptualizing the overall project and serving as the principal investigator (PI). The initiative was founded to expose HBCU students to both diverse academic experiences and the possibilities of graduate education in the UC system. What was initially proposed as a one-year grant has since received a three-year extension because of its success.

Recognizing that many of the students who participate in the program are undergraduates with little or no archaeological background, the university-level curriculum was designed to provide students with one week of intensive instruction at UC Santa Cruz and UC Berkeley, introducing them to the basics of survey and excavation methodology as well as basic artifact sorting and analysis before fieldwork. In the field, students are exposed to four weeks of archaeological survey, excavation, and cataloging. At the conclusion of the program, participants are expected to submit field notes and a summary project if they wish to be eligible for a second year. Finally, students who successfully complete the program are eligible for additional incentives to attend graduate school in the UC system, including waived application fees and graduate funding at an institution in the UC system.

In an effort to include the HBCU students at every stage of the excavations—and to ensure that they are seen not as "shovel bums" but as active knowledge producers with contributions (Gonzalez et al. 2006:398)—students had input as to the location of excavation units and the interpretation of archaeological features. As the UC-HBCU program enters into its third year, the curriculum is undergoing another round of revision, this time providing more opportunities in scuba diving through Discover Scuba training. To date, 14 HBCU students have completed the UC-HBCU program, with two entering PhD programs and one employed with the NPS.

Diving with a Purpose: An Archaeology of Redress in the Hands of Stakeholders

An archaeology of redress is ultimately one equipped at the hands of stakeholder communities, those most impacted by the archaeological work conducted. Predominantly composed of recreational divers of African descent with no formal training in maritime archaeology or coral reef restoration, DWP has partnered with national and international organizations to gain professional skills that have afforded them opportunities to aid in the restoration of coral reefs around the world and the documentation of maritime heritage sites associated with the African diaspora internationally (Lemke, Grinnan, and Haigler 2022).

For the past 16 years, DWP has offered a weeklong maritime advocacy training program to skilled divers, teaching them the basics of maritime archaeology surveys. Following this training, DWP hosts another training on coral restoration in partnership with the Coral Restoration Foundation. The organization sees coral restoration as a component of marine conservation that aids in combating the impact humans have had on the sustainability of shallow-water coral reefs. In this way, coral restoration is an act of redress that accounts for the harm caused to coral by human impact. The participants from each program earn a PADI certification card at the end of the training.

The founding of DWP marks a shift within the field because its core membership is a community group led primarily by African Americans who have claimed a stake in the stewardship of African diasporic history and the oceanic environments that build around and transform these submerged heritage sites. For years before the founding of DWP, the divers that now make up their core membership engaged with diving primarily through the lens of recreation. The founding of the organization in 2003 centered on the quest to locate a ship called the *Guerrero*, a vessel used to carry enslaved Africans across the Atlantic that wrecked along the coast of Key Biscayne in 1827. The partnership that was forged between the NPS and divers, which were affiliated at the time with the National Association of Black Scuba Divers, bloomed into a systematic survey for *Guerrero* in NPS waters. From that project, which took root 20 years ago, a

seed was planted that changed the perception of the DWP divers from recreational scuba divers to cultural stewards and citizen scientists. Divers who founded DWP never imagined themselves as heritage scholars or archaeologists, but it is through their investment in documenting submerged African diasporic history that they have embraced their leading role as cultural stewards and underwater advocates in the field.

Members of ELPAP engaged in coral restoration work through DWP in Florida to assess the possibility of engaging in similar work in the Virgin Islands. On St. Croix, organizations like TNC have established coral nurseries and educated recreational divers on ways to assist with preserving the reefs. Our intention, as archaeologists aware of the legacies colonialism has had on the islands, is to assist with ongoing and future efforts to offer some form of mitigation and redress for the environmental degradation that has persisted as a result of coral mining and pollution from the runoff of historic sugar plantations (Shapiro and Rohmann 2005). While there are current efforts underway, as archaeologists who are also certified scuba divers, we believe we have an important role in assisting with restoration efforts and engaging the local and scuba communities in the historical legacies of coral degradation. This concern is particularly salient, as coral limestone (mined fragments of stony coral species cut, often by hand, from shallow-water coral reefs) lay at the foundation of structures constructed at the Estate Little Princess and throughout the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries on the island of St. Croix and much of the larger Caribbean. In this way, archaeologists are forging new conversations about the intersection of environmental degradation, cultural preservation, and the legacy of colonial violence (Flewellen 2025*b*).

Measuring Success with an Archaeology of Redress

How does one measure success in a project that attempts an archaeology of redress? The answer differs based on the specific needs of the community and the nuances of the project. Nassaney (2011:44) reminds us that community-engaged archaeology must remain a conversation between the community and archaeologists, and therefore needs will be diverse and dynamic. For ELPAP, success is measured primarily by the number of students—high school and undergraduate—who fully complete the program, greater competency and appreciation for cultural and natural heritage on the island, job placement, and university students who pursue graduate training.

As we have mentioned above, all high school students who have participated in the field school program, based on pre- and postevaluations, leave with new knowledge regarding the purpose and function of archaeology as well as new skills in cultural stewardship (Dunnavant, Flewellen, and White 2017*a*, 2017*b*; Dunnavant et al. 2018; Flewellen et al. 2019, 2020). After three years of the youth field school operating at the Estate Little Princess, four high school participants have returned to the site to work as interns with AITC, earning an income for their labor. We have also witnessed former participants later get hired by the NPS as paid interns.

Additional benefits extend beyond the initial intentions of the program. As mentioned above, two local youths who have participated in the terrestrial archaeology field school and gained skills in scuba diving through programming introduced by members of DWP now work in scuba shops on the island. This is a tremendous success given that the scuba industry on the island historically has excluded job opportunities for local youth and directly supports the directive of the archaeology of redress to increase capacity and job placement opportunities when possible. Les Burke (personal communication, March 2019), through JSIS, has received feedback from parents that students who participate in the program have seen grades and behavioral improvements in school.

There are also noticeable successes for the project based on the career trajectories of many of the undergraduates who have participated in the program. Two students from the 2018 cohort have applied and been accepted into graduate school programs. One of these will begin at UC Los Angeles in the Department of Anthropology to pursue a career in archaeology. Several undergraduate student participants still completing their undergraduate studies at their respective institutions keep in close contact with project coordinators. We have worked closely with them to aid in the development of undergraduate honors research projects and provide guidance on other programs related to heritage studies. Two students have participated in an additional field season at the site, while several have expressed continued interest in working at the site another summer.

Working in St. Croix has been equally as insightful to us as archaeologists as it was for the students. In doing an archaeology of redress, we have come to have a greater appreciation for and understanding of the natural environment in all of our archaeological endeavors. With TNC regional headquarters operating out of the two historic planter houses on the site—before the landfall of Hurricanes Irma and Maria—the Estate Little Princess is a space where environmental and cultural conservation and preservation converge (Dunnavant et al. 2018). As archaeologists working at the site, we carried that convergence and mapped it onto our research design. In addition to the sustainable coral restoration work in tandem with archaeology, we also took care to use sustainable practices in our archaeological excavations. We used landscaping fabric to line completed units instead of trash bags to allow soil organisms to percolate through the subsoil. Additionally, we consulted with the local land steward to preserve the native foliage at the estate as we cleared through the brush for the survey. As a reader, you may be wondering why an archaeologist not currently practicing an archaeology of redress wants or needs to engage in this praxis, considering that it is slow and has a tendency to go outside the boundaries of more traditional archaeological methods. This article centers on the ethical imperatives of this work, focusing on how to make our archaeological scholarship relevant in this contemporary moment as central to the sustainability of the discipline. Working in service of communities impacted by archaeological work through strong collaborative relationships allows archaeologists to contribute to the

preservation of cultural heritage, ensuring that it is valued and protected over time through community investment.

An archaeology of redress is not without its pitfalls. For one, collaborative work with multiple PIs, when done correctly, requires communication, care, and adequate attention to the needs of all of the members. Gathering consensus and ensuring that all members of the team are properly heard and respected often necessitates a slowing of the archaeological investigation. Working with various community stakeholders means nurturing relationships and expectations; the same work goes into collaborating among five PIs. For ELPAP, PIs have spent countless hours on conference calls peeling through best practices for community collaboration, paperwork procedures, fieldwork, and lab analysis. This is in addition to planning trips in the spring and winter between field seasons that are conducive to people's work and personal schedules. Personal and professional responsibilities may require individuals to shift the amount of time and resources they can allocate to a project, which necessitates clear communication of roles and expectations that can be revised as needed. Since the start of the project, PIs have shifted in their professions. At various points, PIs were graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty so that each member could gain experience in the various aspects of running the project. ELPAP was established with the idea that it would serve as a training opportunity for the PIs as much as for the students. We understand the archaeology of redress as a praxis that is both experimental and necessary. Thus, the five co-PIs shift the responsibility of the program logistics (management budgets, acquiring permissions, and facilitating housing, equipment, and car rentals) as needed. While this is not generally common practice, we believe that it is imperative that PIs understand all aspects of the project to ensure sustainability and offer meaningful input. Additionally, understanding the politics of hiring, tenure, and promotion in academia, the title of "principal investigator" rotates as needed.

While engaging in the slow practice inherent in an archaeology of redress may be risky for those under the pressure of tenure timelines and the budgetary constraints of CRM contracts, the disciplinary shift is not only worthwhile but also imperative. As two early-career scholars currently making our way through arduous tenure requirements that uphold the "publish or perish" mentality at our respective institutions, we actively choose to engage in an archaeology of redress even as it has meant brushing against norms for what constitutes productivity.

Each of us has had to have intentional conversations with our respective departments to advocate for the community-engaged approach we take in our research to be considered valid academic scholarship. In practice, this has meant advocating for the community meetings we host and the youth and undergraduate fieldwork experiences that have been prioritized in the project over our individual research questions at the site to be recognized in our merit files as valid scholarships. Oftentimes, this has meant publishing peer-reviewed academic manuscripts that make visible this often invisible labor and designing a curriculum for college courses that outlines how to engage in community-centered, redressive work. While we are engaged in these initiatives that make this work legible to our institutions, we recognize that it has often meant additional labor on our end. We want to stress that this is the labor we choose to do, as it is necessary for envisioning the sustainability of the communities we serve and the discipline we have an invested interest in seeing grow. While we can speak only from the experience of early-career scholars who have not engaged in CRM work directly in our archaeology journeys, recent publications that stress the need for community-centered practices within the realm of CRM often point toward the excessive cost for companies and the government to work in reaction to injustice felt and experienced by communities impacted by archaeological work (White 2021).

A detailed outline of the logistics that were poured into the ELPAP, specifically the need to build community among colleagues to create the sustainability of community-engaged research, has been provided elsewhere (Flewellen et al. 2022). Creating such an expansive project with codirectors that resided in different parts of the United States required a lot of logistical planning and advocating for funding. Project codirectors initially met once a quarter and made three or four trips a year to St. Croix, tending to community relationships, particularly after the devastating hurricane season of 2017. The project began as we were in our final years as graduate students, meaning that the seeds for this project were sown with limited funding, as neither of us centered on the project for graduate school dissertation research and we could not seek funding for the work through traditional means. Through seed funding from the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, a recurring $15,000 grant was provided for the first three years and laid the groundwork for this project to take root. Following those three years, project codirectors pieced together institutional funding from postdoctoral fellowships and start-up research funds from the codirectors who were new junior faculty members. The youth field school was possible only because of the in-kind service of Alexandra Jones and AITC. In 2018, we were able to expand the project to train students from HBCUs through funding from the UC system. One of the main concerns regarding a project rooted in the community is the need for funding. The ELPAP began with limited funding and the generous support of community members who opened their homes and volunteered their resources. None of the project coordinators received a salary for the work we did, and thankfully, we have been in privileged positions to be able to do so. However, work at the site is a demonstration of what is possible with limited funding when colleagues have the determination to build together. We were able to expand the impact of the project by bringing together diverse perspectives and coupling thorough youth instruction with rigorous archaeological investigation.

Similar to internal collaboration, community engagement comes with a number of challenges. For one, there is the issue of multiple stakeholder communities. Oftentimes, when examples

of community engagement are presented, they are discussed as a homogeneous group. In reality, groups are heterogeneous, often with some degree of conflicting ideas as to how archaeology and heritage conservation should be handled (Agbe-Davies 2010). Therefore, it is incumbent on the archaeologists to understand and respect the various community dynamics involved in decision-making.

On St. Croix, a presentation among a local community group erupted in rising tensions over the treatment of the artifacts we were excavating at the Estate Little Princess. Since there is no general artifact curation facility on the island, the Estate Little Princess artifacts are stored at Stanford University, with the written understanding that they will be returned to the island when curatorial facilities are created. One group of audience members argued that no artifacts should be excavated until a local storage facility is built. Another argued that artifacts should be kept off the island until curation facilities are built. Finally, a third group wanted all of the artifacts displayed to the local public. Wading into the polyvocality of stakeholder communities is central to undertaking an archaeology of redress. In this case, the meeting concluded with unresolved tension, as it was decided that the artifacts would be moved off the island under the condition that every two years, the situation regarding the status of availability of island facilities would be assessed. In the interim, the project codirectors are working in collaboration with the Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery to provide a public interface leading to greater transparency about the archeological work being done at the estate and the status of the artifacts recovered. The issue of storage on the island is a problem of major concern, as CRM projects occur on the island at the same time the storage facility in St. John literally blew away with Hurricanes Irma and Maria (Roberts 2019).

Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, an archaeology of redress requires a "slow archaeology" approach to focus on student training and community needs as opposed to focusing on acquiring archaeological data. This process is both time-consuming—as excavations move at a slower pace—and, by extension, more costly than acquiring the same archaeological data by hiring a cadre of local excavators. An archaeology of redress calls for practitioners to reckon with the wake of slavery (see Sharpe 2016) to create a praxis that counters forms of epistemic violence by rooting in the needs of descendant and stakeholder communities as well as the environments where they live, as a "practice of freedom." We acknowledge that this call to action is challenging, particularly in the face of limited funding and time that scaffolds the projects undertaken by practitioners affiliated with academic institutions and those in CRM. However, an archaeology of redress speaks to the larger notion that the practice of archaeology in diverse communities has much to contribute to the way we, as archaeologists, view the field. The practice can cause an epistemological shift in how we conceive ourselves, our practice, and our purpose. Redress is not a singular event but a series of continuous processes that seek to make a livable future. Sonya Atalay (2010:427) reminds us, "Making archaeology relevant to the communities whose heritage we are so privileged to study is also a key factor of contemporary concern."

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the communities in St. Croix that make this work possible. This work could not have been completed without the Estate Little Princess Archaeological Project team, including Drs. William White, Alicia Odewale, and Alexandra Jones. Thank you to the Slave Wrecks Project for continued funding and to the Nature Conservancy and the Caribbean Center for Boys and Girls for continued support. Author names are listed in alphabetical order, and in the creation of this piece, work was split evenly between the two authors.

Comments

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Given that this paper traces how archaeological praxis is shaped by and summoned to address enduring legacies of structural inequity, I believe it is worthwhile to appreciate Dunnavant and Flewellen's vision in the specific historical moment I comment from. I write from the early weeks of the second Trump presidency, which have brought a bevy of executive orders that not only threaten the democratic fabric of civic institutions and communities long exposed to the social precarity of the United States but also legitimized a furor of ideological persecution centered on dismantling institutionalized and scholarly commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs. Considering punitive measures entertained by states and the federal government, anxiety and fear cloud decisions of how or whether to continue DEI programs that are often publicly tasked with and often poorly equipped to remedy the lingering structural disparities fostered by the effects of settler colonialism and new modalities of racialized capitalism. I sincerely appreciate Dunnavant, Flewellen, and their collaborators' work on conceptualizing an archaeology of redress in that they outline a mode of academic practice that exacts restorative justice. I want to be careful here in stating that I am not reductively placing their methods or goals in the threatened space of DEI programming/scholarship, as I now fear many of us who labor with and for communities in archaeology may be externally framed, but instead to say that I appreciate their vision as a call to build archaeological research that boldly commits to a reparative

struggle in the *longue durée* that tangibly transforms the communities we can and should labor for.

I specifically see an archaeology of redress's ability to invigorate life as contributing another critical approach within the increasingly popular R's of community-engaged archaeology and heritage studies inclusive of "restitution," "reconciliation," and "reclamation" (Montgomery et al. 2023; Supernant 2024). All, in different ways, seek to reestablish community control in the study and stewardship of heritage, provoke structural transformation by building capacity in archaeology, and ensure that research and practices are conducted slowly, carefully, and ethically, focusing on the communities' well-being. However, Dunnavant and Flewellen offer more in a praxis of redress that is not reducible to closure-oriented reparation frameworks (see Balfour 2023) by drawing attention to how archaeologists can commit to the struggle of historically locating and stimulating lived experience as a "practice of freedom" in the physical aftermath of the transatlantic slave trade. Although the fragments of life assembled from the archaeological record of the historically enslaved community at the Estate Little Princess plantation are not discussed in the piece, the methods of community practice facilitate emergent social possibilities through care for both Crucian-descendant stakeholders and the islands' natural environment. For example, teaching and engaging Crucian youth and students at historically Black colleges or universities through the materiality of Estate Little Princess heritage itself, including diving training, creates opportunity and thus futurity as a lived contradiction against legacies of colonial violence. Alternatively, their attention to environmental degradation through the Estate Little Princess Archaeological Project's capacity to facilitate ecological restoration efforts (including documenting damages) also suggests that archaeologists contend with the effects of colonialism on the local multispecies environment that, in its scars on Ay Ay (St. Croix), highlight how other archives of colonization can be read against to create new futures.

Dunnavant and Flewellen articulate an archaeological praxis of redress by carefully and critically weaving together the work of Black studies theorists (e.g., Hartman, McKittrick, and Bruno), dimensions of Indigenous-driven community-based participatory research, and community-engaged archaeology. The authors' dedication to integrating the first of the three theoretical-methodological foundations is a space where archaeologists still have much to learn by reading and collaborating with/across Black studies, critical Indigenous studies, settler-colonialism studies, ethnic studies, and so on. To do so opens new sites to enact social change, which the authors situate in the methodological movement to go beyond challenging narratives/representation of oppressed communities exemplified by their expansion on the limits of vindicationist scholarship. At the same time, I caution against quick combinations of theory/epistemologies borrowed from different communities and Indigenous/tribal nations that structure the theory and practice of community work that underlie perspectives, namely, the assumption that the restoration of natural heritage enables decolonization. There are Indigenous ontoepistemological relations with the land that necessitate care that are often ignored or assumed within settler-state practices of environmental restoration (Leonard et al. 2023; Newcomb 1995). Taking these responsibilities seriously and generating understandings through "slow relationship" building will enable increasingly holistic reparative relations, especially in ancestral homelands restructured by plantation colonization still occupied by both Indigenous people and minoritized setter-colonial communities (e.g., see Fujikane 2021). I am not accusing the authors' of skipping this consideration in theory crafting or challenging the way they have centered care for the environment in the project because place-specific histories and finalities of erasure (before and after colonization) always enable communities to take up new forms of anticolonial care for the "natural environment" (Carroll 2024). Instead, it is just one consideration for other archaeologists who seek to attempt a similar praxis of redress in other postcolonial landscapes.

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"An Archaeology of Redress: Freedom as Impossible Praxis" is an ambitious essay that reads as part essential reading for an African diaspora archaeology course and part ethical warning/call to action to embed community archaeology projects associated with difficult heritages with particular care. The archaeology of enslavement and slavery afterlives sites without considering the care and sustainability of communities and the land they still live on does a disservice to future ancestors of these areas. Dunnavant and Flewellen immediately establish their professional standpoint by stating that what makes archaeology relevant in the modern world is its sustainability and ethical obligation to community engagement and empowerment.

The article opens by contextualizing the intersection of Black studies, Indigenous archaeology, and community-engaged archaeology and how they have grappled with these issues since the latter quarter of the twentieth century. Archaeology has the opportunity to move beyond its imperialist project roots by adopting an ethically informed praxis of redress as first conceptualized by Saidiya Hartman. While Dunnavant and Flewellen refer to two of Hartman's most popular writings from 2008, "Venus in Two Acts" and *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route*, her concept of redress has been inextricably embedded throughout much of her academic literary corpus. Central to Black studies, Hartman's work seeks to not only interrogate and contest the impact of racial violence,

trauma, and dispossession of enslaved Africans and their descendants but also act as a future-oriented, theoretical afterlife of injustice. Moreover, other humanities-related disciplines have been influenced by Hartman to incorporate social justice activism into their scholarship.

Dunnavant and Flewellen mapped the journey toward an archaeology of redress through an "intellectual genealogy," beginning with Black and Indigenous archaeologists and heritage professionals conversing about their practice of care while doing community-based archaeology. The authors judge some previous archaeology of the African diaspora developed through a vindicationist lens that could not provide the necessary care and redress essential for communities impacted by contemporary archaeological investigations while struggling with systemic injustices. I suspect that some readers may disagree with the authors' critique that vindicationist archaeology is ultimately rendered impotent with regard to social justice activism. For many "illuminating the multiplicity of African diaspora identity formations and experiences" is but one of many steps toward redress. This is evidenced in the authors' use of Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh (2007): "[tell] the stories of those whose past was erased." Thankfully, Dunnavant and Flewellen articulate more clearly why their stance is more than a quibble by stating that redress must tackle how certain social processes, a legacy of Atlantic slavery and colonialism, negatively impacts the environment in which contemporary descendant communities live.

Although Hartman says that redress, at least from an archival science perspective, may be a Sisyphean effort, any attempt is worth the endeavor. More importantly, according to the authors, archaeology's advantage is the ability to interrogate the materiality of what Hartman coined the "slavery afterlife"; that is, the ongoing social, political, and environment effects of slavery. With the Estate Little Princess Archaeological Project (ELPAP) as a case study, Dunnavant and Flewellen provide a blueprint for putting Hartman's theory of redress into an archaeological and ethical praxis underpinned by four principles: make community members equitable stakeholders in the research design, mitigate environmental disturbance, recognize the cultural and natural heritage as interwoven, and train local stakeholders as heritage stewards with the intention of creating higher-education and employment opportunities. Although the importance of training younger stakeholders is well explained, I had some lingering questions about the acknowledgment of elders as the knowledge keepers or the guardians of endangered knowledge and experience in the shadows of heritage sustainability discourse.

I also kept returning to the article's title as an "impossible praxis"—an affect stemming from Hartman's literary attempts to resist the violence and trauma of Atlantic slavery's difficult history and heritage through the resurrection of humanity and the simultaneous acknowledgment and restoration of historical Black (re)action. The article argues that an archaeology of redress, creatively and collaboratively, seeks to privilege the materiality of slavery's afterlife while responding to environmental degradation. Therefore, when considering ELPAP as a case study for redress, is it really an example of impossibility or just the necessary, ethical, if complex, relationship between the past and future?

While many contemporary archaeologists do feel a sense of care and responsibility for the community in which their research takes place, this article begs the question: can we all do this much? Dunnavant and Flewellen do underscore the difficulties of an archaeology of redress and caution how planning with foresight highlights possible problems to manage. One such example is the worry of "too many cooks in the kitchen" when the local communities have an equitable placement with multiple partners. These communities are not monoliths of any particular identity or opinion. There can be emic and etic clashes of group identity definition that impact the potential for legislative recognition and protection. Furthermore, readers will appreciate that the authors recognize and acknowledge that such a measured praxis could be particularly difficult when one is an early-career stage, struggling to navigate the rules for academic development and progression.

Perhaps "An Archaeology of Redress: Freedom as Impossible Praxis" will strike some archaeology readers as didactic, subjective, and unfairly critical of archaeology's traditional role as scholarship for scholarship's sake. It is a bold but measured stance focused on our responsibilities of concern for each other and for the environment but also on how the discipline can and should sustain itself. The crux of an archaeology of redress, for the authors, is essentially an archaeology of ethical care for people of difficult heritages and the landscapes in which they still reside. Dunnavant and Flewellen demonstrate a very clear methodological practice for success, from what many could deem a theory of redress, on its own, as impossible. It is clear that the authors are driven by the need not only to make their work relevant and meaningful but also to transform future legacies from past social and environmental injustices.

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Archaeology of Redress: This Outfit Needs a Makeover!

Archeology is long overdue for a makeover. The colonial-era image of heroic adventurers popularized by Hollywood can no longer dominate public perception, especially as more scholars reject passive acknowledgments of the past and instead engage in a praxis-based archaeology (Tuck and Yang 2012). In their paper, "An Archaeology of Redress: Freedom as Impossible Praxis," Drs. Justin Dunnavant and Ayana Omilade Flewellen offer a transformative framework for archaeology, calling for a

deep, radical shift in the discipline's approach to its colonial inheritance. The authors emphasize the need for a slow archaeology that prioritizes relational accountability, care, and justice-oriented scholarship (Atalay 2012; Freire and Macedo 2014; Tuhiwai Smith 1999).

At the core of their argument is the notion that redress, rather than being a singular act of repair (García 2023), must be an ongoing, community-driven praxis that extends to human and nonhuman relatives alike. This multispecies approach recognizes that the impacts of colonialism are not confined to human communities but extend deeply into the environment and the interconnected ecologies in which we live (Chao, Bolender, and Kirksey 2022). The emphasis on low-impact archaeology and the concept of "archaeology for the seventh generation" serves as a guiding principle for sustainable and responsible research that seeks not only to understand the past but also to repair and heal the ecological and social wounds left by colonization (Acabado and Martin 2020; Fox 2020; Kovach 2009; Liboiron 2021; Wilson 2008).

The Estate Little Princess Archaeological Project (ELPAP) exemplifies the application of the methods advocated by the authors. Its commitment to community-centered archaeology fosters collaboration with local organizations and a broad coalition of stakeholders, reflecting the interdependent, decentralized dynamics they propose. Many groups are involved in this project, such as the Society of Black Archaeologists, Diving with a Purpose, and the National Park Service, illustrating how small-scale, local initiatives can generate ripples of change, ultimately influencing large structural shifts within the discipline—much like a fractal. In this way, ELPAP embodies an emergent strategy for addressing colonial legacies in St. Croix (Brown 2017; Ritchie, Gumbs, and Brown 2023).

Historically, Caribbean archaeology has been dominated by a Western lens that often disregards the lived experiences of marginalized communities. ELPAP challenges this norm by prioritizing community-based interactions and collaborations, providing local youth with meaningful opportunities for capacity building. Rather than adopting an extractivist approach, the project actively centers local perspectives, fostering long-term engagement and empowerment (Kimmerer 2013). The positive outcomes of this approach are already evident, as some participants have achieved personal and professional goals through their involvement in the project. By investing in capacity building, ELPAP moves beyond a transactional model of engagement, instead cultivating an inclusive research environment where local voices shape the narrative.

The authors also recognize the tension between archaeology's role as a scientific discipline and its responsibility toward social justice. They argue that the discipline must move away from the rigid Western frameworks and embrace a more flexible, community-centered approach. Traditional academic institutions, particularly in the United States, value certain types of research outputs, such as peer-reviewed publications and grant-funded projects over community-based work. However, the true value of archaeology lies in its ability to engage with communities, foster healing, and contribute to the creation of just and sustainable futures (d'Alpoim Guedes, Gonzalez, and Rivera-Collazo 2021; Declet-Perez and Rivera-Collazo 2017; Rivera-Collazo 2015, 2018). This shift in perspective requires a fundamental redefinition of scholarly value, one that recognizes community engagement as an essential part of the archaeological process.

The authors' discussion of interdisciplinarity further reinforced the call for a redefinition of scholarly value. By advocating for an integrated approach that bridges scientific inquiry and cultural perspectives, they challenge the artificial divides between different areas of knowledge. Archaeology, as a discipline, has the potential to transcend these boundaries, fostering new ways of knowing that are not constrained by Western scientific thought.

Particularly compelling is the movement away from a homocentric perspective and toward a framework of reciprocity. By considering the interconnectedness between communities and their environments, this work challenges the notion that humans exist in isolation. We do not live in a vacuum; rather, relationships with the environment persist across contexts, although they manifest in different ways. Recognizing these relationships as both distinct and interconnected is one of the most powerful aspects of this project, reinforcing a sense of belonging and identity formation by bridging the artificial Western divide that places humans apart from or above nature (Pukui 1983).

This paper is a critical reflection that aligns with broader calls for more thoughtful, ethical, and responsible research. By embracing a multispecies redress, we can move toward an archaeology that is not only about understanding the past but also about actively repairing the damage inflicted on both human and nonhuman communities. This approach ensures that the discipline remains truly accountable for the legacies of colonialism (Tantaleán and Aguilar 2012).

In particular, the need to diversify archaeology must extend beyond human perspectives. A multispecies approach provides a more holistic understanding of the effects of colonization in the Caribbean, effects that are not solely human but also embedded in the environment itself. These transformations are still visible in the landscape, preserved within the strata of the soil as enduring memories of colonial disruption (Liboiron 2021). To remain relevant for the future, archaeology needs more than just a minor adjustment—it requires a full makeover. The old patterns, stitched together by extractivist and human-centric approaches, no longer fit the needs of the discipline. It is time to tailor a new framework, one woven with relational accountability, environmental stewardship, and intergenerational responsibility.

Finally, the paper offers a much-needed critique of the discipline's colonial history while providing a road map for how archaeology can become a tool for justice, healing, and transformation. It is an invitation to rethink the very foundations of the field, urging archaeologists to embrace community-driven, multispecies approaches that prioritize relational

accountability, environmental stewardship, and intergenerational responsibility. The framework presented here is a vital contribution to the ongoing decolonization of archaeological practice, particularly in the Caribbean and other postcolonial contexts, where the past is still deeply embedded in both landscapes and living communities.

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Impossibility is the epistemological point of departure of the theoretical and methodological reflections shared here—yet such impossibility is presented as a necessary and urgent demand if archaeology as a mode of knowledge intends to exist in the future. Borrowing the formulation of Afro-Brazilian artist Jota Mombaça (2021), this is an invitation to imagine and engage with the "radicality of the impossible" (14) that is the authors' attempt of an archaeology of redress.

The article is a clear exposition of the need to contend with the historical and contemporary colonial structures of the archaeological discipline and, more importantly, a call to transform them in order to truly be in service of communities who are still immersed in the impacts of colonialism, such as Black and Indigenous communities. I translate this invitation into a question: as archaeologists, what are the steps we can take to stop reiterating colonial violence and anti-Blackness through our practice of a discipline that is entirely built on these foundations?

These critical reflections are much needed as archaeological interest in the African diaspora and community approaches keep growing exponentially (Flewellen et al. 2021), but still too little attention is being paid to the real impacts and transformation experienced by the communities that are engaged, involved, and called to participate in such research. While, as the authors remind us, the increase of both African diaspora archaeology and community-based approaches is directly related to Indigenous and Black political mobilization, outside and inside the field of archaeology, questions remain regarding the ways communities can access and benefit from such work when heritage, cultural, and academic spaces are still defined by the interests of the same colonial structures under study. As African diasporic communities are increasingly becoming research participants, and their knowledge, memories, and energy are translated into new sets of archaeological data, is this knowledge production truly serving them and their long-term needs, or is this work yet another form of a colonial extraction process?

Rooted in Black studies theorizations, the article seeks to expose the intersections between the production of archaeological knowledge and the multifaceted aspects of uninterrupted colonial and anti-Black violence (epistemic, environmental, and socioeconomic, among others). The authors do not simply intend to raise awareness of the fact that Black diasporic communities, their lands and waters (and their archaeologists), are still living in "the wake" (Sharpe 2016) or in "the afterlife of slavery" (Hartman 2008*a*). Rather, the sharing of their experimental attempt to conceptualize an archaeology of redress, which they call "a small drop in the ocean of redress," that is, the cocreation of an otherwise pathway for archaeological research, born from their experience on the island of Ay Ay, appears as an offering for archaeologists who desire social justice and real transformations against the impacts of colonialism for the communities they work for.

As a method offering, the archaeology of redress appears in its concrete realization as deeply rigorous and down-to-earth as it is radically countercolonial in its essence. Against the colonial hierarchical fragmentation of "culture" versus "nature," we are invited to mend these two dimensions by equally caring for environmental and social impacts of colonialism, whether it is by mitigating the environmental disturbance of archaeological excavations or by acknowledging the fact that "cultural and natural heritage stewardship are inextricably linked." Against the exploitative and extractive aspects of scientific research, we are shown an example of a research project that responds to the economic needs of communities and offers training, work, stipends, and job placement opportunities. Against the colonial imposition of research, we learn how to create spaces of choice and decision as communities are partners in the formation of the research design.

Why, then, is the notion of impossibility so present? The authors share their awareness of how insufficient these small actions might appear in front of heavy colonial structures (such as the limitations related to funding) and the complications and contradictions that can arise, exemplified by rising tensions and disagreements over the treatment of artifacts. In this sense, it would be easy to simply dismiss the concrete potential of this attempt and qualify it as ultimately impossible. Impossibility is the epistemological point of departure and a constant companion of the archaeology of redress. It is a reminder that the colonial project is ongoing and unbroken—mechanisms are in place to ensure that anticolonial critiques remain ineffective. Archaeology is still something happening *to* Black and Indigenous communities, not yet something they can fully choose.

Yet let us remember that the method offering of the archaeology of redress is born of Black studies epistemologies as well as its countercolonial essence: as such, it demands of us another understanding of the very concept of "impossibility." What is deemed "impossible" becomes a space of reinvention beyond the limiting possibilities of the colonial project, a space born from the refusal of "the world as we know it" (Ferreira da Silva 2022; Mombaça 2021). We are asked to refuse the current ways of the world and engage in imaginative and concrete practices of reconfiguration of the entire field of archaeology as we know it. This is a call to idealize and materialize an otherwise mode of knowledge that can truly be part of the "practice of freedom" of global Black, Indigenous, and colonized communities.

This calling asks more of our imagination, not less: the notion of redress invites us to go beyond the tangible aspects

of what we can offer or mend. As we reckon with the ontoepistemic violence that has imposed certain notions of reality that silence and forbid noncolonial understandings of the world (of time, of matter, of beings), how can our archaeological praxis make space for these otherwise ontologies that are silently experienced by Black and Indigenous communities? What would be an archaeological praxis that escapes and undoes the reality created by modernity/coloniality? How do we embrace more concrete aspects of an archaeology of ontological redress? Offering water to the ancestors and restoring coral beings might be some of the first steps. Others are still being imagined and cocreated.

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9 II 25

A Hypothesis of Redress: Embracing Archaeologies of Possibility

One of the biggest challenges I had reading this paper was to believe that archaeology could afford the world's oppressed, forgotten, and stolen peoples the agency to seek and attain redress. While certain discoveries of Black bodies have surfaced the harm, had any of the excavations advanced more than symbolic dimensions of redress (Blakey 1998; Roberts 2020*a*)?[3] I held on to these ideas for two reasons. The first is because of the history of archaeology as an extractive arm of imperial conquest, slavery, and colonialism. As Dunnavant and Flewellen responsibly note, "Archaeologists rarely acknowledge our work as the continuation of environmental degradation that falls within the legacy of settler-colonial land extraction." Furthermore, the field is responsible for undergirding scientific racism, as well as for looting sacred objects and artworks (now requiring repatriation) of nonwhites around the world.[4]

Second, the term "redress" and its synonym "reparation" have recently become diluted in public discourse and universities. The malleability and ease with which the terms "reparations" and "redress" have become interchangeable with "repair" is notable. Conversely, the United Nations frames reparations "as measures to redress violations of human rights."[5] These United Nations' framings and definitions of reparations cite redress as a concrete remedy in the form of legal claims, which serve as the basis for financial compensation. In other words, nothing is metaphorical for those who bring their case before the United Nations. These descriptions connote direct accountability between the oppressed and the oppressor. This has led me to dispute claims about the field's capacity to seek and secure tangible, palpable justice.

Although I came to Dunnavant and Flewellen's article with these presuppositions about the "watering down" of reparations in mind, I instead found an article about historical archeology (archives and records) sensibly situated within Hartman's constructivist notion of redress. However, I would argue that instead of archeology of redress, they would do their work more justice if they situated it as a work in applied theory leveraging the scientific method (hypothesis testing) while simultaneously imaginatively engaging in the most transgressive notions of possibility within Black studies—that of the speculative (science fiction; Butler 2023) redress.

Hypotheses can and are meant to be tested. Much of what is contained in these case studies and analyses are sample tests and experiments leading us to new ways to construct healing, harm, and redress within archaeology and cultural resource management–related fields (history, anthropology, architectural history, historic preservation, cultural landscape studies). The contributions made to practice and pedagogy are substantial. Dunnavant and Flewellen describe the archeology of redress as embedded in the engagement, recovery, and creation of archives or artifacts. They also introduce a language of redress within archaeology that focuses on care, time generosity, and transparency. For example, they describe archaeologists' accountability within this praxis of redress as "tending to legacies of inequity" and the multiplicity of ways the "shape and texture of community archaeology" can emerge during their work.

The redress of archaeology includes accountability beyond that of producing scholarship but centers instead on reversing the fields' dehumanization of the long-dead, living, and those to come through its processes and scholarship. The authors argue that justice is a direct aim and not just a by-product of their work, stating that they are responsible for not just "dismantling colonial structures and mentalities but also actively reversing them." They illustrate the dehumanization of anti-Blackness undergirding the field when describing the lack of access to archeological programs at historically Black colleges and universities and, subsequently, a lack of African American archaeologists in the field. Building on the work of community-engaged archaeologists such as Edward González-Tennant, they also emphasize the environmental segregation that archaeology has caused as a dimension of harm, for which they endeavor to provide redress through the reconstruction of gardens and low-impact excavation processes. This contribution to framing harm and redress in archaeology is impactful in planning and policy spaces, as the distribution of gains and losses during the age of climate crisis requires a new basis for establishing the disproportionate costs that communities of color have experienced on a time horizon that surpasses the period in which impacts of climate change were measured or tracked. Time is also a domain

3. FBISD Sugar Land 95 Executive Summary, 2020.

4. See "Archaeology and Colonialism," *Sapiens*, https://www.sapiens.org/teaching-unit/archaeology-and-colonialism/ (accessed February 2, 2025).

5. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is the United Nations entity mandated to promote and protect all human rights for all people. For specific definitions of "reparations," see https://www.ohchr.org/en/transitional-justice/reparations (accessed August 11, 2024).

of claiming harm and redress throughout the piece, adding an essential contribution to the practice of archaeology—spaciousness and attention to the polyvocality of stakeholders—and rejecting the tyranny of enumeration of success that dehumanizes and flattens the contours of possibilities of Black lives in the archival record and grant reports (Roberts 2018; Spillers 1987).

The team's future explications of the theory, framework, and practices should more confidentially assert their redress praxis as a normative intention or goal for general archeological pedagogy, practice, and policies. They have been testing their hypothesis that redress must be sought simultaneously on two fronts—the practice (of research and engagement) and process (seeking funding for and educating future archaeologists) of archeology—in ways that diversify what is, in European and American contexts, still a blindingly white academic discipline with predominately white practitioners. Finally, their deep engagement with the concept of "other possibilities" can reinvigorate historic preservation (Roberts 2024), urban planning (Bates et al. 2018; Crow 2019), history and literature (Hartman 2008*b*), and Black studies (McKittrick 2006) at a time when such work is reactively becoming more compliant and fearful.

Despite my hesitancy about the power the authors initially attributed to archaeology, I remain cautiously optimistic about their claims about how relevant the field can become if rooted not only in the past but also in the present. I see an applied theory emerging from a hypothesis worthy of all the funding and support necessary to test the spectacular work done through the Estate Little Princess project and Diving with a Purpose. For Dunnavant and Flewellen, archaeology has become a space of possibility and an instrument of redress with the capacity to facilitate social justice, raise collective consciousness, engage in critical analysis, and enact change. They have converted a nonbeliever.

Reply

We are sincerely grateful for the deep consideration and comments provided by the reviewers. It is hard to believe the amount of work that has taken root since the initial draft of this publication. Since submitting the manuscript in 2022, so much in the world has shifted. We began conceiving of an archaeology of redress as an articulation of our long-held belief that the archaeological work we carried out on St. Croix, US Virgin Islands, had to contend with the field's inheritances of extractive colonial violence and demonstrate relevancy in the present moment. We held this belief even as we, two archaeologists of African descent who codesigned a project with multiscale practices of community engagement at its core (Flewellen et al. 2022), were confronted with the legacy of past harms brought to us from community members during public forums, K–12 and college classroom visits, and public archaeology days. It was determined early in 2016, as we met with community members across St. Croix about the possibility of a maritime and terrestrial archaeology project, that the practice of archaeology would attempt to study and redress the extractive practices so ingrained in the field by centering on community needs and community capacity building for heritage stewardship.

Our intellectual framing of an archaeology of redress took form in the early years of our work on St. Croix; however, we put pen to paper (well, fingers to keyboards) in the aftermath of the summer of 2020 when the field seemed to coalesce around a new fiery desire to address ongoing injustices and inequities in the field, made more hypervisibile by the inequitable access to health care illuminated by COVID-19 and cries during global protests against police violence following the murders of Brianna Taylor and George Floyd. In the span of nearly half a decade since we began drafting this article, we witnessed and were a part of the groundswell calling for multiscale change (Flewellen et al. 2021; Franklin et al. 2020), and the horizon of possibility felt hopeful as we watched Trump leave office. However, that horizon, which felt close in our initial years of writing this work, where we saw the development of legislation for the protection of African burial grounds (Sholts 2025), the founding of a coalition of archaeology center directors from across the country meeting to address everything from toxic culture in the field to accessibility of field schools, and the creation of fellowship programs designed to support African diaspora scholarship in the field, has felt further than ever before. Yet, as Nathan Acebo mentions, the first year of Trump's second presidency has heightened the attention for engagements with archaeology; moreover, the government shutdown, regression of conservation laws, and conversations of increased mining have only served to increase the need for archaeologists—particularly those who work in ecology—to engage in reparative work.

We gladly place our practice of redress alongside what Acebo coined as the popular "R's of community-engaged archaeology and heritage studies, inclusive of 'restitution,' 'reconciliation,' and 'reclamation," as we work in a community of practice with colleagues, many of whom we have the pleasure to also call friends. We might also add "reparations" and "repair" to the list of R's often invoked in conversations of redress within Black communities. Yet we hold the caution brought forth by Andrea Roberts, in her underlining how "the term 'redress' and its synonym 'reparation' have recently become diluted in public discourse and universities," where "the malleability and ease with which the terms 'reparations' and 'redress' have become interchangeable with 'repair'" has all but been reduced to symbolism losing its ability to materialize tangible change in the lives of impacted community members. We must be more vigilant in naming the processes by which we seek redress. To this end, Jovan Scott Lewis (2023) provides more refined definitions of "reparations" and "repair": the former being the process by which those complicit in harm offer a form of redress and the latter being the process in which the harmed community attempts to address the harm done to

them. Rather than waiting for reparations, we believe engaging in repair offers new possibilities of both redressing the material effects of colonial harm and exploring ways of intergenerational healing.

While Roberts remains "cautiously optimistic," we are glad to read that in the testing of an archaeology of redress in the field at the Estate Little Princess we have been able to demonstrate a practice that reaches toward what Acebo articulates as "archaeological research that boldly commits to a reparative struggle in the *longue durée* that tangibly transforms the communities we can and should labor for." While this work is grounded in a Black studies theoretical framing, it matures alongside Indigenous archaeology and decolonizing frameworks, not hastily but rather as a pedagogy of crossing, to pull from Jacqui M. Alexander (2006), that slow process of solidarity building forged through vulnerable exchanges of ideas and experiences with our colleagues over food, in Zoom meetings during the pandemic, and in the hallways between conference presentations. Just as an archaeology of redress is articulated as a practice of impossibility because of its commitment to the journey toward redress rather than redress as a destination, so too is our commitment to tethering together liberative practices within the field.

Turning to our emphasis on an archaeology of redress as an impossible practice, it is worth addressing the commentary from both Peggy Brunache and G. Omoni Hartemann on our use of the term "impossible." Hartemann shares thoughtfully, "Against the colonial imposition of research, we learn how to create spaces of choice and decision as communities are partners in the formation of the research design. Why, then, is the notion of impossibility so present?" While Brunache writes, "When considering ELPAP as a case study for redress, is it really an example of impossibility or just the necessary, ethical, if complex, relationship between the past and future?" Admittedly, our turn to the term "impossible" was an effort to shed much of the academic posturing that can accompany pieces such as this (as Javier Garcia-Colon and Keolu Fox hint to), with grand proclamations about our ability to materially address and tend to the acute accumulation of violence inflicted on communities by harmful archaeological practices in the past and ongoing in the present (perhaps Roberts was correct to be suspicious).

As we articulated in the piece, we picked up the term "impossible," drawing on Stephen Best and Saidiya Hartman (2005), to emphasize the "doing" of redress as never fully complete. As Brunache states, such "doing" is "the necessary, ethical, if complex, relationship between the past and future," while holding on to the fact that the futurity of this work is unknown and therefore should not be foreclosed to just what we as authors are capable of seeing as possible. One way to drive this home is the thoughtful additions that Javier Garcia-Colon and Keolu Fox provide in thinking deeper within our emphasis on the colonial impacts on the environment to take seriously "a multispecies approach" that "provides a more holistic understanding of the effects of colonization in the Caribbean, effects that are not solely human but also embedded in the environment itself." Similarly with foreclosure of a known destination for an archaeology of redress, it is possible to imagine it beyond the field-specific boundaries, as Roberts points us toward in her calling in the possibility of this work being "impactful in planning and policy spaces, as the distribution of gains and losses during the age of climate crisis requires a new basis for establishing the disproportionate costs that communities of color have experienced on a time horizon that surpasses the period in which impacts of climate change were measured or tracked."

Finally, we mentioned the concept of intergenerational healing briefly. It is worth noting that we are currently exploring the notion of heritage, trauma, and healing in relation to maritime archaeology and slave shipwrecks in separate works. Flewellen (2025*a*) explores the concept of the sonic somatic relationship between breathing underwater, memorials, Black history, and commemoration and Black scuba divers dive on slave shipwreck sites. Dunnavant in an unpublished manuscript explores how Black divers engaging with the materiality of the slave ship—shackles, wooden wreckage, and the documentary archive—allow archaeology to serve as a medium through which mourning can occur. These pieces, while seeming apart from the current article on the Estate Little Princess, should be read as a continued rumination of an archaeology of redress.

We hope that this piece serves as a clarion call to move beyond the boundaries of our individual disciplines and the confines of academic research toward action-oriented, engaged praxis. The discussion put forth in the article is but one way we are envisioning an archaeology of redress. It is dependent on us all—through trial and error, experimentation, and sustained conversation and collaboration—to imagine other forms of redressive work.

—Justin Dunnavant and Ayana Omilade Flewellen

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