Public versus Private Faces of Gender: A Feminist perspective of Gender Roles on the Late Victorian Montana Mining Frontier

By: Marta A. Timmons
Coloma, “The Mystery Camp of The Garnets”

http://www.visitmt.com/categories/moreinfo.asp?IDRRecordID=6725&siteid=1
Coloma Timeline -

1852 - Discovery of Gold in Montana
1867 - Gold Discovered at Garnet
1868 - Mammoth Lode Discovered
1885 - Cato Mill Operational
1890 - Mammoth Gold Mining Company Acquired the Mammoth Mine
1893 - Six Hard Rock Mines in Operation
1894 - Mammoth Mill Purchased
1895 - First References to the Town of Coloma
1896 - Coloma and Garnet are Linked by Road
1898 - Road is widened for wagons
  - Mammoth Mine Defaults on its Loans
1900 - Mammoth Mine Reopens
Coloma Timeline, continued -

1905 - Mammoth Mine Reports Significant Water on All Levels, 350 Through 150 Levels Underwater, $500,000 of Blocked Out Ore Inaccessible

1906 - Mammoth Mill Returns to Operation

1907 - Mammoth Jr Claim Filed

1908 - Coloma Post Office Closes

1910 - Dewatering Tunnel Underway

1916 - Last Deep Mining Ceases at Start of WWI

1916 - 1950 Coloma Mines are Sporadically Operational at Shallow Depths Producing Gold, Silver, and Copper
The Coloma Archaeological Project 2005-2010
Coloma Feature Map in 2005

Coloma, MT
24MO172

Legend:
- Prospects
- Fence Posts
- Ditch
- Trenches
- Roads
- Wood
- Dump Piles
- Buildings
- Outlined Area
- BLM_Boundary
- Trash Dumps

Bureau of Land Management
Research Timeline

2005 Research ~

Achieves Oral Histories & Construct a History timeline
2006 Field Season ~

Feature 300, Depression Era Dump

Alex Baer
Sarah Tarka
Benjamin Woody
2007 Field Season ~

Feature 172, 1890’s town Dump

Feature 131, Residence

Jennifer Ogborne

Coloma Archaeological Project
2008 Field Season ~

Feature 131, Residence

Maggie Thurlo

Coloma Archaeological Project
2009-2010 Laboratory Season ~

Victoria Luksha

Photographs by Rose Campbell

Coloma Archaeological Project
2010 Field Season ~

Comet Mine

Ryan Wendel

Coloma Archaeological Project
Work to be completed ~

Final Oral Histories and Archival Research
Artifact Analysis for a Cross Community Comparison
Construction of a Final Feature Map and its Integration with the GIS and Laser Scanner Data
Rectifying the Prior Cultural Inventories with the Feature Map
A Cross Community Study -

Coloma Montana, circa 1900

Garnet Montana, 1898

- From a inclusive feminist perspective.

Kenneth Brown Collection

Leipheimer Collection
A Feminist Approach

An Inclusive Feminist Approach – Assuming no “Fixed singular universal role”  
Spencer-Wood 1996:403

“Consider the possible diversity, complexity, and flexibility in gender relationships”  
Spencer-Wood 1996:402

A focus on individual female agency
The Three C’s of Historical Archaeology
Research Goals and Questions

1. Develop a Detailed History for Coloma
2. Document Coloma’s Cultural and Geographic Features
3. Locate and Identify the Chamberlain House
4. A Cross Community study of Coloma and Garnet
5. Community Level Expressions of Gender
6. Public and Private Spaces / Victorian Assumptions
7. Gender Roles on the Frontier
Research Methods

Community Study Approach

Testing Around Features  Feature Excavation
Archival Research        Missing Building Identification
Remote Sensing Survey    Artifact Cataloging & Curation
Contour and Road Mapping  Artifact Conservation
Mapping of Cultural Features  Photographs
Structure Recording      Zooarchaeological Analysis
                         Quality Assurance
Magnetic Map of Sand Hill Cemetery

Coloma Archaeological Project
Feature 52, The Moss House

Coloma Archaeological Project
3D Color Laser Scan of the Moss House

Coloma Archaeological Project
Resistivity Experiments at Sandhill Cemetery: 6/24/2008

The wood stake is the 13th electrode, at 6 meters on the results. The line (590) starts at the fence on the right (north) and goes south 11.5 meters with an electrode every 0.5 meters. The electrodes are deployed along the tape measure. Note that the next image is looking the other (easterly) direction.

Resistivity result (model) from a dipole-dipole array in the NE corner of the Sandhill Cemetery (looking east). It is hard to imagine that the alternating blobs are not graves given the other indicators. It is a little puzzling that some are highs, others lows. The feature around 8 meters is about where the trees are. The feature at 10 meters seems to continue to depth but is too close to the edge of the results to be conclusive.

Electrical Resistivity Experiments at Coloma, 6/17/2008

Equipment/software general protocol:
- Iris Instruments 24 channel automatic switching unit (aka the Syscal Kid)
- 24 electrodes spaced at 0.25 meters
- Data collected for Wenner and dipole-dipole electrode configurations
- 3-10 stacks (averaging of multiple experiments) per electrode group
- Stacking stopped when standard deviation drops below 3%
- Prosso II software from Iris instruments
- RES2DINV v 3.4 inversion software from Geotomo Software

Experiments at the potential grave site

I deployed 24 electrodes with an electrode to electrode spacing of roughly 0.25 meters. Some intervals were off by up to 20% due to rocks restricting driving the electrodes into the ground. Once placed the instrument tests the contacts of each electrode pair and, after all contacts are good, conducts the measurements. Once deployed, the Syscal Switch polls the electrode groups in a number of traditional arrangements. I used the traditional Wenner electrode arrangement and replicated the measurement three times.

Figure 2. Depth section (model) of resistivity from the first Wenner profile. Distances are in meters and color contours are resistivity in ohm-meters. This is the calculated subsurface resistivity beneath the potential grave site as determined from the first Wenner profile. The high resistivity (red) area in the top-center is where the stones are; 2.75 meters is about the center of the stone pile. Beneath that is a lower resistivity zone which extends to at least 0.84 meters. That low resistivity (blue) zone disrupts higher resistivity ground to the sides and is likely an old excavation of some sort (trench, grave, pit). The second and third set of measurements in this configuration produced essentially the same result.
Data Analysis

Gender as a “Unit” of Analysis

How do researchers move from empirical material culture to making inferences about cultural abstractions such as gender and community?

Or, as Chris Merritt so aptly put it, “Where do you draw the lines? Where does Coloma start, and Garnet end?” The same question applies to gender: Where do male and female “forms” of material culture start and end?
Where do male and female “forms” of material culture start and end; and how do archaeologists make valid statements about gender from material culture?

Gender Markers ~
-Even with the recent past, there are problems in identifying archaeological signatures of gender, specifically that of exclusivity of male or female use.

Gender ideology predetermines gender roles and thus gendered artifacts. If gender ideology states that men and not women were miners, then all mining artifacts are male.
Statistical Models Identifying Over Whelming Male or Female Artifacts ~

(e.g., Spude 2005)

Garnet School 1900, 1st Grade, Miss Woods

Luann Leipheimer Collection
Jane Austen

“[men] have had every advantage of us in telling their story. Education has been theirs in so much higher degree; the pen has been in their hands. I will not allow books to prove anything.”  (Austen 1818:242)
do re mi ~

(Rodgers, Richard and Oscar Hammerstein III, 1959)

A layered approach to gender using multiple lines of evidence ~

Gender markers in the Archaeological Record ~

Statistical models to identify use and gender ~

Text ~

Oral Histories ~

Women’s history in their own words ~
Initial Inferences -

Coloma, circa 1900

Kenneth W. Brown Collection
Hillma Hanson Kimbal

Butte, 1904

Chamberlain House, 1897-98
To Whom This May Concern— I have this day dispossessed of all right, interest or title the house situated in Coloma to Mrs J. W. Moss.

John, Ashton

Ovando Historic Museum
Gender in the Archaeological Record

Public vs Private Victorian Gendered Interpretations
Frontiers as a crucible of social change ~

the presence of women had implications beyond the demographic structure of the population - Women’s participation influenced the economic base of the settlement, the ways in which work was organized; diet the appearance of the homes, social activities and more - Women were not only present in the settlement, they actively and significantly shaped the ways in which the community operated and saw itself - Our focus on men and machines has obscured the complexities of gender on the frontier - The impact of women, behind the public face that is projected may be far more extensive then reported in the male produced written word - (Susan Lawrence, 2003)
The Public vs Private dichotomy fails to account for women who had working partnerships with their husbands -

Emma Wolf, Montana circa 1900
Anna Elmira “Billie” Moss, Coloma MT

Acknowledgments

~ Professor Kelly Dixon, Univ. of Montana
~ Maria Craig, BLM
~ Professor Tom Foor, Univ. of Montana
~ Professor Kimber McKay, Univ. of Montana
~ Professor Caitlin Desilvey, Exeter Univ.
~ Professor Anna Prentiss, Univ. of Montana
~ Jennifer Ogborne, William and Mary
~ Chris Merritt, USFS
~ The Descendent Community
~ All the students and colleagues, who by toiling long hours made this project possible

Thanks,

M. A. Timmons
Department of Anthropology
The University of Montana