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The Age of Consumption: A Study of Consumer (and Producer) Behavior and the Household

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THE AGE OF CONSUMPTION: A STUDY OF CONSUMER (AND PRODUCER) BEHAVIOR AND THE HOUSEHOLD

by

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A Thesis submitted to the Graduate College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
Department of Anthropology
Western Michigan University
April 2013

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THE AGE OF CONSUMPTION: A STUDY OF CONSUMER (AND PRODUCER) BEHAVIOR AND THE HOUSEHOLD

Stephen A. Damm, M.A.
Western Michigan University, 2013

While anthropologists have often emphasized the importance of factors such as the household's age, lifecycle, and kinship within the context of the wider community, archaeologists have paid less attention to these factors. Using data from the excavations of eighteen farms in the Finger Lakes National Forest, occupied from the 19th century into the 1930s, I examine how household age influenced the consumer choices made by a sample of households and how aspects of production and consumption were prioritized within this context. By examining broad patterns in the archaeological and historic data, an age-based analysis as a young/old categorization is juxtaposed against an interpretation of aging as a process that occurred over time to highlight and explore the complexities in approaching these issues. The role of kinship in structuring the prioritization of consumption and production on these farms is explored. I argue that accounting for these multiple issues adds nuance to archaeological interpretations by situating these households both within their own lifecycle and within the inter-household social world they inhabited, while also providing a more holistic examination of consumption as it relates to production.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank everyone who has helped me with this thesis specifically, my graduate career in general, and life as a whole both in the past and I would like to preemptively thank everyone who will help from here on out. Western Michigan University and the Department of Anthropology has generously extended funding to me for five of the last six semesters, which is greatly appreciated. Lauretta Eisenbach has helped ensure all the ducks, proverbially and otherwise, are in a row. I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Bilinda Straight and Dr. Paul Mullins, for serving on my committee and providing me with their feedback and insight. Special thanks are due to my committee chair and advisor, Dr. LouAnn Wurst, who has patiently reviewed all the iterations of this project and many others, providing me with constant feedback and guidance. The community of Hector and the U.S. Forest Service have graciously hosted this project for over a decade, and without their continued support my project would never have happened. I would also like to thank all my friends, family, and colleagues who have helped and supported me through the last three years, especially Erica D’Elia, and of course my dog Buffaloo, who has exhibited unfailing love and patience with me. Any mistakes contained in this project are of my own doing, and not the fault of anyone else.

Stephen Damm
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, production in America underwent a shift from being primarily domestic to increasingly industrial. This shift was accompanied by a glut of mass produced consumer goods introduced into the market, resulting in a widespread consumer culture (Groover 2003; Gibb 1996). The resulting uniformity of goods available for purchase by consumers has rendered many archaeological models designed for earlier periods unusable (Rotman 2005; Gibb 1996), since differences become minor and are often based on what goods were available for purchase in an area, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, wealth, or any other social dynamic (Gibb 1996; Mullins 1999; Friedlander 1991). The similarity of available goods does not, however, render archaeology moot. Instead, by paying attention to variations and similarities between sites and assemblages, a more nuanced understanding of this consumer culture and how it influenced and was influenced by the social milieu can be attained (Mullins 1999).

Historical archaeologists have been aware for some time of the importance of studying consumer behavior, both as it pertains to larger social and economic patterns and how it is informed by the social patterns at work within the household. Consumer behavior is not a simple matter; rather than making purely economic choices individuals are influenced by various social factors such as class, race, ethnicity, and gender (Gibb 1996; Henry 1991; Mullins 1999). Historical archaeologists have studied these issues as
they pertain to consumer behavior (Mullins 1999; Groover 2003), but have not strayed far from the triad of race/ethnicity, class/status, and gender. I will argue that, in addition to these factors, other dynamics play a major role in consumer behavior, particularly household age and lifecycle. I will examine the role these factors play by expanding the standard definition of consumer choice/consumption as separate from production (Wurst and McGuire 1999; DuPuis 2000), and instead including productive decisions alongside consumer choice. The Hector Backbone of the Finger Lakes National Forest in New York provides an interesting opportunity to examine the influence of these social dimensions since data from a 22 farm sample provides a rich context to explore these aspects of consumer behavior. I will focus on the role of household structure, including age and lifecycle, as well as kinship in structuring the range of choices that influenced these farms’ consumption as well as their production. The complex social networks between families and familial dynasties that spanned generations in this region give a unique opportunity to explore how these factors affected consumer choice. While previous archaeological investigations into consumer culture have shown the relevance of race and ethnic identity to the patterns of consumption, this dynamic is largely a non-issue on the Hector Backbone since the farm owners were white and predominantly Anglo-American.

The purpose of this project is not simply to look for the presence or absence of consumer goods since the ubiquity of consumer culture in this period ensures their presence. Rather, I will examine the patterns of consumer behavior in the archaeological record in order to explore the influence of underlying social relations and structures
(Henry 1987). As other archaeologists have already pointed out, certain groups engaged with consumer culture differently, both in terms of what products were consumed (Friedlander 1991), what these goods were used for and represented (Mullins 1999), and how these materials were disposed (LeeDecker 1994). By examining the broad patterns and general trends in the archaeological and historic records of the Hector Backbone region of the Finger Lakes National Forest (FLNF), I will explore how social dimensions beyond race and status impact consumer behavior.

The farms of the Hector Backbone provide a unique opportunity to examine the ways in which households responded to both internal dynamics of the members as well as the pressures and influences from the community at large (Rotman 2005; Blackwood 2003; Adams 1990), as well as the way in which a single household changed through time and how these changes in developmental cycle are expressed materially (Wheeler 1996, 2001; Rotman 2005; LeeDecker 1994; Friedlander 1991). The choices these farm families made were situated at the intersection of their needs, desires, and resources. While class and wealth have long been considered paramount to understanding consumer behavior, fully understanding how and why these choices were arrived at requires an exploration of a myriad of social factors which defined these households and helped shape not only their means, but also their needs and desires. By examining variations in the archaeological and historic records, I will explore how historical archaeology can yield a more nuanced understanding of consumer behavior—one that incorporates not only status and wealth but also kinship and household lifecycle into an understanding of consumer behavior.
I will begin by providing a review of the literature. Chapter 2 will serve to situate my thesis within a larger academic discourse, including providing the necessary review of theoretical perspectives to consumer behavior. The goal of this chapter is not to provide a comprehensive checklist of previous scholarly work, but rather to discuss how my work will contribute to this overall discussion.

In Chapter 3, I will provide a basic context for my later discussion by describing the project area and the larger goals of the Finger Lakes National Forest Farmstead Archaeology Project. I will then discuss methodological concerns pertaining to my analysis. After that I will provide a brief history of the archaeological sites and material assemblages in association with the specific households I will be utilizing. Chapter 4 will provide a comparative analysis between a select few sites which will serve as a foundation for the remaining analyses. This comparison will demonstrate the complexities between the sites, both temporally and in their respective household composition. The next three chapters will build upon these basic comparisons.

Household age is the main factor that I will consider, both as an essential category (Chapter 5) vis a vis other households and as the process of a single household as it ages (Chapter 6). Chapter 5 will explore how household age impacted the ways different households consumed. Chapter 6 will approach household age from a different angle, considering how the process of aging impacted consumption and how consumption changed as households aged. Rotman (2005) has discussed how age may play a role in determining the extent to which a household participated in consumer culture. The age of the occupants relative to each other, including parent-child relationships at various stages
is another factor that would influence consumption patterns, as different ages had
different desires and needs (Westoff 1961; Wheeler 1996, 2001).

Chapter 7 will serve as a discussion of all the previous analyses and an elaboration
on how kinship networks in the area influenced consumer behavior. The idea of kinship,
while often discussed in anthropology, is typically left out of archaeological
investigations, either ignored outright or simply equated with the household. Kinship,
however, is more often greater than a household, and networks of households often exist
in a region. In the Hector Backbone region of the FLNF, this is certainly the case and can
be clearly seen in the historic records. Many of the farm families in the study area were
related, either through blood or through marriage. As an example, Catherine Dunham
and her husband Sylvester established a farm next to Catherine’s brother, Erastus
Wickham. Later, in order to establish their son William, Sylvester purchased another
neighboring farm. The connections between sites can be explored via both the historic
and the archaeological records. Kinship patterns are important to consider in the context
of household age and lifecycle, as this is where kinship is structured and changes most
dynamically. This chapter will also seek to explore the connections between choices of
consumption and the choices these farms made in their production.

The Hector Backbone provides a useful opportunity for examining how various
social dynamics often overlooked by archaeology, such as age and kinship, inform
consumer behavior. A large collection of sites, similar in many regards, allow for these
factors to be examined. By examining these issues through the archaeological record, a
deeper understanding of how people identify themselves and how these identifications
influence their behavior can be reached. The often-noted importance of issues such as age and kinship in the anthropological literature suggests that these issues should be equally important for archaeologists, and should not be ignored or reduced.
CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH

As production in America shifted from a rural and domestic model to a more industrialized system of mass production, farms were naturally impacted. The requirement to feed an ever-growing number of people in urban areas who were no longer able to produce their own food, along with the introduction of global markets and the increased specialization of production, forced a dwindling number of farmers to adopt more intensive agricultural practices. This change resulted in a system of rural production that was aimed at supplying specific goods to a wide market, and the diverse array of goods required for the farmers were now produced elsewhere en masse and brought in for sale (Gibb 1996; Rotman 2005). Individual households engaged with this material primarily as an act of consumption, and this behavior will be the starting point of my discussion. Consumer behavior will serve as the theoretical foundation for my analysis of the consumption patterns of the farm families on the Hector Backbone. Over the last 25 years, the topic of consumption has been in mainstay, both broadly in the social sciences (Belk 1995; McCracken 1988; Campbell 1995) and specifically in archaeology (Spencer-Wood 1987a; Mullins 2011a). To begin the discussion, I will present an overview of the major approaches to consumer behavior, culminating with an analysis and integration of the most recent developments of consumer choice theory in archaeology. From here, I will assess how consumer choice provides a unifying framework for my analyses.
Approaches to Consumption

Scholars have developed a variety of theoretical frameworks to understand consumer behavior. These include the concept of a rational consumer (Mullins 2011a), a trickle-down model of consumption pioneered by early sociologists such as Veblen (1965) and Simmel (1904), models of consumer choice dictated by production associated with the Frankfurt School of Adorno and Horkheimer (1944), and an expansion on the Veblenian model using the ideas of Bourdieu and Foucault (Schor 2007), which sees consumption as an active and direct expression of identity and identification (Mullins 2011a, 2011b). I will elaborate each below.

Rational Choice Theory

Rational choice theory is an important model for consumer behavior (Barnes and Sheppard 1992; Martin 1993). In short, a choice is rational only if it maximizes utility, which reflects the order of preference for a choice (Allingham 2002; Baltas et al. 1997). There is much discussion about the exact conditions surrounding rational choices. For social sciences, however, these choices must be kept within a proper cultural context.

Barnes and Sheppard (1992) define three main tenets of rational choice theory in its application to economic choices. First, there is the “invisible hand” assumption—that in free markets, individual self-interest maximizes wealth for everyone. Second, the intentions of an individual are attained through rational choices. Finally, collective action will exist only in extreme circumstance, since self-interested individuals will opt out. In
this discussion, the second of these tenets is the most important to analyze. Since it suggests that the order of preferences is meant to achieve a predetermined goal, and if it is not doing so the choice is irrational.

Despite its apparent simplicity in social sciences, rational choice theory has allowed for a great deal of exploration and is often a foundation for later models. Wroe Alderson (1958), for example, outlines eight situations in which a product might be purchased, all steeped in the idea of a rational consumer. While these do not warrant further summary here, it is worth noting that these motivations vary from purely technical considerations to socially imbued decisions. The acknowledgement of symbolic and social meanings to consumer goods and the associated role these play in influencing consumer behavior do not reject the rational choice; utility is still maximized by these choices, but the definition and exploration of what utility means and how it is measured, particularly the subjective nature of this measurement, has become a stronger focus of research.

One final consideration with this model must be pointed out before continuing, one that is especially relevant to archaeological interpretations. The direction of choice based on utility assignment is, for all intents and purposes, timeless (Allingham 2002). Goals are not prioritized in terms of their time frame in this model. In contrast, people are often faced with choices between immediate, short-term, and long-term goals (Damm 2000). That said, material culture reflects rational choices insofar as it reflects the ordering of preference of the choices. While rational choice has often been regarded as simplistic and treating choices merely as reflecting “dominant material conditions and the
consumers’ positions within those conditions” (Mullins 2011a:5), it has the potential for much more nuance than has been explored, at least explicitly.

The fact that human choice is made both in time (that is to say, with regard to future plans and past events) and in a social and cultural milieu convolutes the entire process, making decision making infinitely complex and any choice at any time potentially rational, given the definition of the term. If this model is taken solely in terms of economic utility, then archaeology becomes a cost analysis of the artifacts. While this is a useful tool, it must be remembered that utility is not solely economic. The true role of an archaeological analysis of consumer choice is not to assess whether or not the choice is rational, but rather to uncover the structure that defined utility for the choices that were made and which made these choices preferred.

Trickle Down Models and Reaction

Building from the foundation of rational choice, several other theories developed throughout the 20th century. My intent with this overview is to provide the necessary background for my later discussion and as such some of the discussion will be brief for expediency.

The earliest of these was initially proposed by the sociologists Thorstein Veblen and Georg Simmel, and expresses a trickle-down view of consumer behavior. The model is grounded in the concepts of material visibility and conspicuous consumption. The upper class elites, according to Veblen (1965), consume highly visible status markers as a way to differentiate themselves from non-elites. Since visible displays required an actual
investment of capital, it functions as a “low-cost and accurate mechanism for transmitting information” (Schor 2007:18). Veblenian models do not, therefore, relate to the consumption of all goods, but rather the relationship between this visible consumption and non-visible as well as non-private consumption (Schor 2007).

Within Veblenian models, goods are initially adopted by the elites as status displays. However, these displays are later mimicked by those further down the socio-economic ladder, a process expedited by the proliferation of cheap forms via mass production (and consumption) and the capitalist market. Following this proliferation, the elites adopt newer, and presumably more expensive, forms of consumption and display, which will in turn be co-opted; hence, the idea that goods trickle down through the social strata. This process leads to the creation and constant flux of what Simmel (1904) calls fashion.

This model assumes that utility is determined by status maximization, and that individuals are “fully informed, in command of their desires, and operate in a well-organized social environment of shared assumptions and values” (Schor 2007:18). The consumption is still rational, since preference is based on the ability of the item to signal status within the constraints of economic resources. In addition, consumption in this model expresses societal rather than individual attitudes. The stylistic elements are treated as being devoid of meaning as well, with their form being secondary to the difference between forms.

Veblenian models were not without their detractors, and after rising to prominence for much of the 20th century theorists developed newer and more complex theories. Some
of the critiques challenged the focus on consumers as status seeking, arguing instead for a more postmodern treatment of the consumer undergoing a constant process of self-creation. Other critiques pointed out that these models see all innovation coming from above, and thus all innovation was the product of social elites. It was equally common for innovation at the margins of society to trickle up (Schor 2007). While this point is true, it can be argued that a Veblenian, status-seeking model need not be trickle-down. Adaptations of trickle-down theory argue that the salient point is the diffusion and adoption of innovation, prompting new innovations and distinctions. The complex nature of society and culture inevitably means that these changes may come from any direction; the constant flow and change of fashions is what is important. Furthermore, Veblenian models do allow for individualization within certain constraints, as Schor (2007:21) puts it, “as long as differentiation is matched by consumers’ ability to decode consumption styles and choices.” McCracken (1988) proposed a revised trickle-down model, which included a more refined approach to social groups that included multiple vectors of social identity and an inclusion of symbolic motives to fashion change. Archaeologically, this ebb and flow of fashions translates into an examination of the forms and decoration in the artifact assemblages.

A major critique of Veblenian models of consumption was espoused by the Frankfurt School, particularly the idea of culture industry formulated by Adorno and Horkheimer (1944). They argued that consumer culture and behavior ultimately were dictated by production. The drive for profits forces the creation of homogenous products to please as wide an audience as possible. Production creates a homogenous consumer
culture that reproduces the system’s homogeneity (Adorno and Horkheimer 1944; Ewen 1976; Schor 2007). This model was critiqued for its denial of any human agency or meaningful choice. However, it does have the strength of including both production and consumption in the model, effectively denying the bifurcation common in previous models (recall that Veblenian models never considered production). This model also gives a great deal of influence to producers and advertisers as the creators of consumer demand.

While the Frankfurt School would put forth an image of the consumers as hapless recipients of whatever dominant cultural form producers give them, many theorists have taken the opposite view—that individuals are agentic and influence, through their choices and interactions, the productive forces. The framing of this issue has often caused more issues than it has resolved though. Assuming that either producers or consumers are powerless vis-a-vis the other ignores half of reality. Individual consumers have the agency to make decisions, but these choices are still highly formed by the overarching culture industry (Fine 1995; Schor 2007).

Modern frameworks for consumer choice attempt to reconcile these earlier theories and their critiques. Consumers are seen as acting to define themselves both within society and individually, although caution is given to projecting modern (or rather, postmodern) conceptions of self-identity into the past (Miller 1987; Wilk 2009; Mullins 2011a). Igor Kopytoff (1986:64) argued that a commodity not only needed to be produced, but also “culturally marked as being a certain kind of thing”. Consumption, in this framework, is the end result of commoditization, as mass consumption makes
everything exchangeable. As objects become commodities, they are alienated from the producer and ultimately find new association as the consumer takes possession (Kopytoff 1986; Marx and McLellan 2000; Straight 2002). This alienation from objects, and the identification with objects produced by other people, has led Daniel Miller (1995c:2) to point out that consumption “may not be about choice, but rather the sense that we have no choice but to attempt to overcome the experience of rupture by using those very same goods and images which create for many the sense of modernity as rupture”.

Daniel Miller (1987, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c) pushed the discussion of consumption ahead significantly. Consumption, he argues, is a way in which people construct their social and personal identities (Miller 1987). He also argues that consumption can serve equally well in producing difference, as Mullins (2011a) suggests, as well as in emphasizing homogeneity and conformity (Miller 1995b). Scholarship has long treated consumers as active agents operating with the constraints of cultural and societal mores, socio-economic clout, and personal goals and intentions (Meuller 1958; Politz 1958; Stouffer 1958), but more recently all of these forces are seen to influence both what consumers’ desired outcomes are as well as the means available to reach those outcomes.

In the latter half of the century, the topic of consumer behavior was picked up within the anthropological literature, exploring how consumption is connected to culture in a dialectical relationship. Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood (1979) led the charge for consumption studies in anthropology. They defined consumption to be anthropologically and cross-culturally applicable, as the “use of material possessions that is beyond commerce” (Douglas and Isherwood 1979:57). Connecting the idea to the
broader conceptual basis of anthropology, they state that “consumption is the very arena in which culture is fought over and licked into shape” (Douglas and Isherwood 1979:57). This relationship between culture and consumption is deepened by the creation of rules surrounding consumption. Grant McCracken (1988) also emphasizes that culture and consumption are intertwined. McCracken argues that consumers will effectively “purchase up” so that all their goods are on par with the most expensive. In keeping with the view that goods broadcast social messages, this process ensures a consistent signal is broadcast.

In sum, views on consumer behavior changed throughout the twentieth century. Building on a fundamental assumption of a rational consumer, Veblen and Simmel built a theory in which fashions were markers of social standing and trickled down from higher to lower classes in a dynamic, ever changing process. While this theory had its faults, it is still a common approach, albeit in modified versions. In response to the Veblenian model, Adorno and Horkheimer of the Frankfurt School emphasized the role of production in determining the demands of consumption. While this approach is not without merit, it has largely been eschewed by anthropology since it presents an almost total denial of individual agency. Instead the consumer is cast as the ultimate decider, browsing the shopping aisles in an ongoing effort to create a personal identity and constantly seeking novelty and sensation (Martin 1993).

Anthropology, for its part, has emphasized the role of culture in the process of consumption, both in determining what gets consumed and in being shaped by that very consumption. A balance has been struck between the individuals-as-agents and the
individuals-as-receivers schools of thought, casting consumer choice as a complex phenomenon in which social factors, economic reality, and personal preference all play a role (Martin 1993; Glennie 1995; Wilk 2009,). Martin (1993), treating consumption as a framework for material culture studies, emphasizes the way goods are status markers in social hierarchies, the role of fashion in spurring changes in manufacture, and the ways objects are given meanings at a personal level (Csikszentmihalyi 1993; Martin 1993; Majewski and Schiffer 2009). Drawing from this literature, historical archaeology has, in the last 25 years, sought to utilize consumer behavior as a theoretical model, and it is to these developments we now turn.

Consumer Behavior in Historical Archaeology

Given the central role of material goods in studies of consumption, using consumer research as a framework for archaeological interpretations seems obvious. Historical archaeologists regularly make use of consumer behavior as a framework. This framework is capable of exploring both broad, general patterns as well as the finer nuances in material culture.

Within archaeology, consumer behavior has been a prominent topic for the last 25 years. The topic first gained prominent attention with the publication of Consumer Choice in Historical Archaeology, a volume edited by Suzanne Spencer-Wood in 1987. Spencer-Wood (1987a:10) states that consumer choice models are valuable for archaeology because they are “concerned with the factors affecting individual selection of goods in the context of the supply-demand interactions of a market economy”. Spencer-
Wood (1987a) points out the value of consumer choice models as a theory to unite archaeological patterning with cultural behavior theory, in part due to its emphasis on the material goods people acquired, used, and ultimately disposed of into the archaeological record. Among the most prominent variables used to explain consumer choice in this volume are socio-economic status, fashion, market access, ethnicity, and particular historical events (Baugher and Venables 1987; Spencer-Wood and Heberling 1987). However, discussion of these issues was often constrained methodologically, since ceramic indices and faunal remains were used as the only indicators of these different variables (Miller 1980, 1991; Spencer-Wood 1987b). A straightforward application of the rational consumer model was evident, as choice was related primarily to cost and income (Garrow 1987; McBride and McBride 1987; Singer 1987; Spencer-Wood 1987b).

Spencer-Wood (1987a) also argues for an archaeological focus on households as the basic unit of analysis, building upon the work of Wilk and Rathje (1982). She points out that artifacts recovered from a yard can at best be related to everyone living at the household at a given time.

Lamenting this lack of methodological maturity, the 1991 special edition of *Historical Archaeology* sought to rectify this deficiency. Susan Henry (1991) proposed a general model of consumer behavior using an artifact life history approach (Schiffer 1975, 1983; Dannehl 2009). She also elaborated on the necessity of archaeology to consider consumption in terms of households and not individuals, considering consumption as a social as well as a physical behavior. She recognizes the point that households are not uniform entities. The manner in which the household exists, both
internally (as the individuals relate to each other) and externally (as the household related
to other households), will impact the patterns of consumption witnessed in the
archaeological record (Henry 1991). In addition, Henry cautions against equating
households with families, since any household may include boarders, laborers, and other
unrelated people. In the case of the Finger Lakes National Forest, it is equally important
to remember that the family may easily extend beyond any particular household. Henry
(1991) also outlines four main components to the behavior: the decision to consume,
acquire, use, and discard.

LeeDecker (1991) examines the tools archaeologists have used to look at
consumer behavior, which he defines broadly for archaeology as the patterns of
acquisition and use of material and non-material goods, showing the emphasis on ceramic
cost indices and faunal remains while pointing out the need to move beyond simplistic
assumptions of cost/status comparisons. He outlines several key components
archaeologists must consider when analyzing consumer behavior including income, group
traditions/behaviors, market availability, rural versus urban lifeways, household life cycle
and structure, income strategy, artifact use-life of durable and consumable goods and
artifacts, and expenditures. He argues that archaeologists have been deficient at
considering this last point, and he suggests a multi-disciplinary approach to fix this gap in
methodology.

Throughout the next two decades, the topic of consumption enjoyed popular
discussion (Lucas and Shackel 1994; Miller 1995a and 1995b; Cook et al. 1996; Gibb
Wealth, offers an extensive discussion of theoretical models available for interpreting consumer behavior archaeologically. Gibb’s work focuses on earlier English colonial sites, which as Rotman (2005) has pointed out may make it harder to employ since the shift in methods of production was accompanied by a uniformity of goods at drastically different sites. Friedlander (1991) addresses this issue, and provides a way to analyze consumption and wealth while accounting for the similarity in the availability of goods.

Paul Mullins (1999) uses consumer culture as a way to analyze the material culture of race. He shows that, despite a lower socioeconomic status, African Americans in Maryland opted to purchase higher cost national brands to ensure control over both quality and quantity. Thus they entered into the consumer culture in order to circumvent the effects of racism. This example demonstrates how consumer choice models can be expanded beyond the confines of status or class to discuss more complex social vectors.

Groover (2003) discusses the development and adoption of consumerist attitudes and the attendant changes in material culture in his discussion of the Gibbs farm in Appalachia. Majewski and Schiffer (2009), building upon the literature of the archaeology of consumption, advocate for a consumerist archaeology, which they argue will “explain, through comparative studies, differences and similarities in consumer societies and in their developmental trajectories” (Majewski and Schiffer 2009:192). Their distinction of consumerism, versus consumption, aims to extend the agenda beyond the acquisition of goods and any attendant institutions and processes to include the cultural relationship between humans and consumer goods and services. While their
argument emphasized the multiple scales at which consumption occurs, their forced
demarcation between consumption and consumerism is largely a semantic device.

Paul Mullins’ (2011a) book *The Archaeology of Consumer Culture* renewed the
discussion, framed in terms of consumer culture. Mullins (2011a) reiterates McCracken’s
view of consumption that encompasses an item’s entire lifecycle. He also notes that	
treatments of consumption are useful at explaining local conditions as well as how these	
conditions tie into larger social processes. He further emphasizes the role of consumption
in creating and maintaining a social identity, although he acknowledges the slippery
nature of these ideas within archaeology. In 2012, the Annual Conference of the Society
for Historical Archaeology included a session, chaired by Suzanne Spencer-Wood,
revisiting the changes and current ideas in consumer behavior studies within archaeology.

Utilizing Consumer Behavior

As the previous overview on theories of consumption demonstrates, consumer
behavior is a broad topic with multiple approaches. Understanding consumer choice is
never a simple or straightforward task, however. My analyses will explore how entangled
these issues all are by exploring the issue of household age and lifecycle.

Analysis of the relationship between households and consumer behavior extends
beyond archaeology. Authors included in *Household Decision Making*, a volume edited
by Nelson Foote (1961), explore the interaction of these ideas in many different ways.
Westoff (1961) examines pregnancy and childbirth as a consumer choice, while other
authors in this volume examine the acquisition of family assets (Hill 1961), consumer
choice and family composition (Clawson 1961) and the variations in class and age and household decision making (Becker 1961; Farber 1961; Komarovsky 1961). Within archaeology, the relationship of households to models of consumer behavior have been important as well (Henry 1991; LeeDecker 1994; Wheeler 1996, 2001; Groover 2003, 2004 Rotman 2005).

These authors all argue that household composition must be central to any consideration. Richard Blanton (1994:5) defines a household as “a group of people co-residing in a dwelling or residential compound, and who, to some degree, share householding activities and decision making”. As Penelope Allison (1999) emphasizes, households are not homogenous entities defined by a listed head-of-household, but are complex and heterogeneous. In addition, the demarcation of households as physically bounded has both its utility and its drawbacks. Archaeology often relies on this definition since it solves the problem of equating social units with architectural features (Wilk and Rathje 1982; Alexander 1999). While it does serve to mark inclusion and exclusion and sidesteps the difficulty archaeology faces, it can also mask social factors that may create households that transcend obvious physical boundaries. By focusing on non-structural evidence, Karen Meadows shows how the search for houses can be integrated with less tangible residency and mobility patterns (Meadows 1999). Historical archaeology has the potential to go even farther, and by integrating kinship and familial relationships, the interpretations of households will be more complex than purely architectural definitions allow (Lawrence 1999).
The issue of household boundaries and composition is linked with issues of
gender and age within the household. Gender in archaeology has been an important topic
for some time (Conkey and Spector 1984; Brumfiel 1992), and I will not try to summarize
the associated literature as it is well beyond the scope of my study. However, the idea
that gender has implications for consumption patterns has long been understood
(Mahoney 1961), as Carl Naether’s (1928) book Advertising to Women makes clear.
Given that this work is contemporaneous with the late occupation of the FLNF, it
provides a useful framework for understanding cultural expectations of gendered
consumption, although translating this into lived reality is tenuous at best. Scanlon
(1995) explores the way gender, and specifically womanhood, interacted with consumer
culture. Spencer-Wood (1999) points out that the practice of identifying households by
the male head of household serves to mask the presence and importance of women and
children. Evelyn Blackwood (2003) looks at agrarian female-headed households and
provides useful terminology and theoretical bases for examining what exactly a woman-
headed household would mean, and warns against defining it in terms of a man’s
presence or absence.

Groover (2004) discusses these issues under the lens of control. He identifies two
types of control, simple and complex. Complex control is a broad concept linked to
“modern complex farms and large capital operations” (Groover 2004:40). In the context
of a household, simple control is more immediately relevant. It refers to the “informal
incentives and sanctions that the heads of households in rural families wielded to
maintain authority over and appropriate labor from their progeny” (Groover 2004:40).
It is important to keep in mind that households are loci of both consumption and production, and they provide the structure through which individuals collaborate and reproduce society. Many studies of household organization have focused on production, especially production of goods intended for use outside the household itself (Allison 1999). But while households are a center of production, they are also a center of consumption (Brumfiel 1992; Allison 1999; Spencer-Wood 1999).

In these respects, age and lifecycle are important areas for consideration. It may be that age is a much more important factor for consumer behavior than simply being a marker for access to material resources as used by Rotman (2005). Changing notions of childhood, the theory and practice of retirement, and the marketing of products to and for specific age groups are all tied up with age, as is the very notion of household lifecycle. Census records and population schedules indicate age and occupation, including retirement, and thus serve as a basis for using these vectors in my analysis. Age includes not only the household composition but also the lifecycle of the household as an entity. Lifecycle is, in general, the series of changes that occur as a result in changes in age, typically marked by major life transitions (LeeDecker et al 1987; Groover 2004). That lifecycle changes influence consumption is already well-researched and documented (Westoff 1961; LeeDecker et al. 1987; Henry 1991; Wheeler 1996, 2001; LeeDecker 1994; Groover 2004; Rotman 2005). Rotman (2005) briefly addresses the fact that age can influence the household, in that younger couples typically have less material wealth available for consumables than more established households. Wheeler (1996, 2001), Rotman (2005), Groover (2004), and LeeDecker (1994) all refer to age in passing when
discussing household development cycles. The most superficial survey of my data shows that age may play a direct role in consumer behavior, since the two largest assemblages of the Owen and Wyatt households are associated with younger couples. In order to explore lifecycle and age, I will follow the general model employed by Groover (2004). Groover groups households into three categories: young, mature, and old. The young stage is marked by a general expansion of the household and property. At the onset of the mature stage, children begin setting up their own households in a fissioning process. Finally, a household enters the old stage where only the elder couple remain. This stage is followed by a succession period. During this period, a new household establishes itself in the house or property and begins a new period of expansion. Rather than lift this model verbatim, I will modify it to highlight the different changes I wish to explore. In Chapter 4, to explore household age as a bounded category, I will use the old/young categorization. In Chapter 5 I will reconceptualize the mature stage as a transitional period between the young and old in order to explore the ways in which the aging process impacts consumption.

Several authors have discussed houses and the entire farmstead, including barns and outbuildings, wells, and privies, as consumer goods (McMurry 1988; Blanton 1994; Spencer-Wood 1999; Huey 2000; Pena 2000; Groover 2008; Wurst 2007). Friedlander (1991) demonstrates that not all households chose to display their wealth with material goods, but opted instead in invest in property, including land and architectural improvements. This observation forces us to include the house or even the landscape as a consumer item, expanding our view on the material expression of consumption. In
addition, Eva Mueller (1958:13) suggests that adoption of innovation in household appliances, and by extension the houses themselves “accelerates consumer purchases” in a manner similar to that proposed by McCracken (1988).

Groover’s 2004 discussion of stages of household lifecycle, outlined above, is also useful for interpreting changes to the house and household landscape. Periods of household succession and expansion, Groover argues, are evident on the landscape as changes to the farm size and layout as well as to expansion or relocation of architectural features, including outbuildings and the houses themselves. These landscape changes can be viewed as a type of consumption the households chose (White and Kardulias 1985; Adams 1990; Groover 2008; Laurence 2009)

Anthropologists have often discussed kinship in societies (Godelier 2011), and my study area contains families that spanned generations, often with the establishment of new households. However, it is unlikely that in creating a new household families would have completely severed ties with the previous households. While it may be that “kinship relations everywhere divide as much as they unite individuals and group” (Godelier 2011:483), it does not serve to ignore either these divisions or unities. Children and parents, as well as siblings and more removed kin may well have identified with each other and formed relations of mutual support and interaction distinct from the larger community. Family networks and kinship are infrequently addressed in archaeological analyses since the physical space of the house is typically equated with a social unit. In reality, households are much more clearly defined by social criteria than by the purely physical aspects.
The topic of kinship is often left out of household archaeology literature or mentioned only tangentially. Wheeler (2001) addresses the role family networks play, focusing primarily on inheritance and disposal associated with major household changes. Rotman (2005) argues that the ways in which people performed their roles within development cycles reflects the negotiation of dominant ideologies. Lewis’ (2003) analysis of how a widow utilized social rules and laws to keep property away from her second husband and thus provide for her children from the first marriage illustrate how members of a household often have conflicting agendas, and how historical archaeology can fruitfully explore these nuances. On the Hector Backbone historic records give detailed information on the exact familial connections within and between the households in my sample. Ignoring the kinship links between these households would mask one of the major ways people may have identified themselves, and the FLNF offers an opportunity to examine the archaeological implications of a facet of anthropology typically unexplored by archaeologists.

Mullins (2011a) warns against formulating limiting definitions on a topic as broad and dynamic as consumption, as this would only “impose false coherence”. He argues that we need our definitions of consumption to encompass “the acquisition of things to confirm, display, accent, mask, and imagine who we are and who we wish to be” (Mullins 2011a:135). At the same time he reminds us that “consumer agency and symbolism are significantly influenced by dominant structural processes” (Mullins 2011a:135).

For the purposes of this study, I will be defining consumption as the processes by which households made use of finite resources, such as money, time, labor, goods, and
services, in pursuit of goals. This definition should serve to frame my discussions without constraining my analysis or artificially masking phenomena outside of the definition. While my analysis focuses on households in this definition, following LeeDecker and Friedlander (1985), Spencer-Wood (1987a), Henry (1991), and it must be noted that households are always comprised of individuals who may or may not have the same agenda; thus understanding who is making the consumer choices presents an added nuance to the research that must be taken into consideration.
CHAPTER III

A DISCUSSION OF THE CONTEXT OF THIS THESIS

The Hector Backbone is part of the Finger Lakes National Forest (FLNF) located in Schuyler County, New York. The area was originally settled in the early 19th century after the land was divided into military lots as payment for veterans of the Revolutionary War. By the 1830s, the early settlers had turned much of the area into cultivated farmland, with as much as 57% of the land under cultivation by 1835 (Conklin 2011). The population of the area continued to grow until the mid-19th century, but between 1850 and 1900 the population decreased by 30% (Conklin 2011). In the early 20th century, agricultural professionals at the nearby Cornell University argued that something must be done about the “farm problem” in order to keep these upland farms from flooding the market with substandard goods. To combat this, the federal government introduced the Resettlement Administration, a component of the New Deal of the 1930s. Tracts of land deemed submarginal or unsuitable for modern agricultural production were purchased and the farms were abandoned (Conklin 2011). The lands acquired on the Hector Backbone would eventually become the Finger Lakes National Forest.

The Finger Lakes National Forest Farmstead Archaeology Project began in 2000. The project, directed by Dr. LouAnn Wurst of Western Michigan University, has investigated 22 farms and domestic sites as well as a mill and a schoolhouse, and recovered over 160,000 artifacts (Table 3.1). Investigations have focused on the southern end of the Hector Backbone (Figure 3.1). This concentration ensures that the sites
examined all would have been accessing similar marketplaces in the larger towns and cities to the south, such as Elmira, Corning, and Watkins Glen, as opposed to markets located further north.

Table 3.1: Sites investigated in the FLNF Farmstead Archaeology Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Number of artifacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Dunham</td>
<td>5,594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC Wickham</td>
<td>4,821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albright I</td>
<td>5,031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albright II</td>
<td>5,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell</td>
<td>9,652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bement</td>
<td>1,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creighton</td>
<td>5,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunham I</td>
<td>11,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunham II</td>
<td>6,439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dusenbury</td>
<td>1,536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardner</td>
<td>12,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimble</td>
<td>5,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee I</td>
<td>22,365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee II</td>
<td>2,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McNetton</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saw Mill</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purdy-Velie</td>
<td>14,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Henry</td>
<td>8,364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Dunham</td>
<td>7,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoolhouse</td>
<td>4,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>12,937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wickham</td>
<td>13,340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The larger project aims to understand the lives of the farm families that lived on the Backbone, and how they negotiated the changes that occurred in agricultural practices resulting from larger national and global transformations of capitalist agriculture. These transformations can be understood as a change in the process of farm production, with the
labor practices and methods becoming increasingly intensive. In addition to being incorporated as producers, these households were also incorporated as consumers; they became more active participants in the consumer culture which emerged at this time. My thesis will explore how this incorporation happened within the context of consumer choice.

Figure 3.1: FLNF Farmstead Archaeology Project location

This chapter will provide an overview of the background information necessary to properly frame my argument. I will begin by addressing methodological concerns,
including how the artifacts have been organized and how the data is presented. I will then provide specific histories of the primary households I will be working with. I will conclude this chapter with a general comparison between several sites. This comparison will frame the larger discussion of my thesis.

Methodological Concerns

My analyses draw on the Finger Lakes National Forest Farmstead Archaeology Program database. This project has investigated numerous farms, each with very different occupational histories. Before proceeding with a detailed discussion of the material culture associated with these occupations, I must address several methodological concerns. I will briefly discuss my data sources and outline the artifact classification system employed by the project. Then I will address the issue of site nomenclature. While the project had distinct archaeological sites, those names are not the ones I am utilizing. Finally, I will situate the assemblages I am using, discussing their place in the history of their respective sites, and of the Hector Backbone as a whole.

Previous studies have tended to approach the topic of consumer choice by analyzing a single type of material culture, such as faunal remains or ceramics (Klein 1991; Klein and LeeDecker 1991; Wurst and McGuire 1999). This methodology leads to a simplistic assumption that the given form of material culture is solely indicative of consumption (Majewski and O’Brien 1987; Spencer-Wood 1987b). By examining multiple forms of material culture, as well as multiple facets of each form of material
culture, I will explore productive as well as domestic consumption to illustrate how these choices were more complex than simply a yes/no decision.

There are several key historical records I will use in my discussion. Population schedules of federal and state censuses provide a good look at who was living in a given household, their ages, and even their occupations. These are available for most of the time period under investigation every 5 or 10 years. Agricultural schedules, available from 1850-1880, give insight into farm values, types of products being raised, and how much land was owned and under cultivation. These records need to be evaluated, since specific listings may include a farmer’s total land holdings. In some cases, one farmer owned property in multiple locations. The availability of these records encompasses many of the farms on the Backbone, but many of the later farms and some early ones are not represented in any agricultural schedule. To attempt comparison with later farms, tax records will also be used. These records extend into the early 20th century and give total property values, allowing for a comparison to the property values from agricultural schedules. Agricultural schedule data is available for the entire Town of Hector, representing about 700 farms for each census year. This larger sample will be employed for comparison against the specific farms I am basing my discussion upon.

All of the artifacts recovered through the FLNF Farmstead Archaeology Program have been cataloged using a non-hierarchical taxonomic system intended to capture the most information possible from a wide variety of historic material culture. The system categorizes artifacts by group, type, material, form, decoration, and color (Table 3.2). In addition, physical attributes (weight, size, number of artifacts) are recorded and there is a
section for comments. Begin and end dates are recorded for all artifacts for which this information was known.

Table 3.2: Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Remains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architectural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene/Medicinal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household/Furnishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/Amusement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools/Arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation/Mechanical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I will employ several main analytical approaches within this framework. These approaches will often use Type as the main classification, but material, form, and decoration will also be used. Types represent various ceramic and table glass vessels (Table 3.3). When I discuss food preparation vessels or tea/tablewares, I am referring to their respective types. When I discuss durable consumer goods, I am referring generally to the types in Table 3.3 as a composite. These durable consumer goods are goods that were purchases as a product in and of themselves, and were typically kept for a long period of time. The group includes several types of ceramics, including food related types such as tea and tablewares and food service as well as toilet ceramics such as washbasins and chamberpots, and household and decorative items, such as flowerpots. It
also includes table and drinking glass. While this is a different material from tea and tableware ceramics, they are functionally similar. This set of durable consumer goods is often juxtaposed against bottles, which were purchased for their contents and typically disposed of. When I refer to bottles, I am discussing the types classified in Table 3.4.

Table 3.3: Durable consumer goods type codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Prep/Storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tableware/teaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household/decorative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unident Ceramic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service/toilet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table/drinking Glass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decanter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.4: Bottle type codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-unident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-wine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-beer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-liquor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-bitters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-medicinal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-condiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-soda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-extract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-ink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-cosmetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-spice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-chemical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle-mineral Water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I will also often employ material as an attribute for analysis (Table 3.5), particularly for ceramic vessels. Since the frequency of different materials changes through the 19th century, I will not discuss them as though their associated interpretations were definitive. Instead, I will discuss them broadly; I will often refer to white-bodied earthenwares. This material set refers to the materials of whiteware through whiteware/ironstone on Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Material codes for ceramics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiteware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ironstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearlware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearlware/whiteware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiteware/ironstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creamware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellowware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthenware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoneware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porcelain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undif. Ceramic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-porcelain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Creamware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivory Bodied Ware</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are limitations to the methods I am employing. Since the primary classification is based on function, large portions of assemblages are by necessity classified generically, as either “unknown”, “unidentified”, or “other”. Also, by focusing on broad patterns, I have ignored some nuance. The use of amalgamated categories such as “white-bodied earthenware” does mask variation between the constituent materials,
variation which has been utilized to great effect in other studies (Baugher and Venebles 1987; Rotman 2012). While more nuanced and detailed analyses are possible, the comparisons I am making will focus on general patterns, with more specific data used selectively.

Site Histories

Since the crux of my discussion is centered on exploring the differences in how households engaged with consumer culture, specific household structure is central to my discussion. While distinct sites have been investigated as part of the FLNF Farmstead Archaeological Project, their occupations are often complex and represent multiple families. Rather than focus my analysis at the site level, I combed through the database for analyzable assemblages that are associated with a distinct household. For the sake of clarity, throughout my thesis I will refer to these primarily by the name of the family the assemblage is associated with. I will discuss a number of different assemblages throughout the following chapters. In order to avoid lengthy discussions of site histories in each chapter, I will introduce them all here (Figure 3.2). This will include the context and history of the site as a whole, information on the particular household or households I am considering, as well as an assessment of their age and lifecycle. I will classify the households in several ways based on their age and lifecycle, generally following Groover (2004). Younger households, households with young children, and newly married couples will generally be considered young households. Households with no children or grown children and older heads of household will generally be considered old.
households. These young and old households will be used in Chapter 5. Other
households will be regarded as examples of the transition of a household across the entire
lifecycle, including succession in some cases. These are households that occupied the
same farm from a younger age to an older age, generally through retirement, selling to the
government, or death. They will also often have raised children who then moved away to
start their own households. I will focus on these transitional households in Chapter 6.

Young Households

Creighton

George and Gladys Creighton bought the A. Dunham farm in 1925, when George
was 32 years old. They kept the property until they sold it to the government in 1937.
George Creighton, Jr. was born in 1930, adding an additional dynamic to this household
as it entered a new stage of its lifecycle. I am treating the Creighton household as a
younger household.

A privy (Feature 5) and a surface dump (Feature 8) are associated with the
Creighton occupation. The privy (Figure 3.3) was excavated in seven levels, and the
dates indicate that the entire feature was filled quickly. This feature yielded 2671 artifacts
representing 16 vessels. The mean date for the privy is 1913 and the \textit{terminus post quem}
(TPQ) is 1929, clearly relating to the Creighton occupation from 1925-1937. Feature 8 is
a surface dump located a good distance from the house. Due to the size of the dump, the
material was sampled; 1334 artifacts and 219 vessels were identified. The mean date for this feature based on vessels was 1905 with a TPQ of 1929.

Figure 3.2: 1901 topographic map showing locations and boundaries of farms (adapted from United States Geological Survey 1899)
The Creighton occupation dates to the early 20th century when agricultural schedule data is not available. However, Alexander and Olive Dunham operated the farm from 1875 until 1915 and are represented in the agricultural schedules. This data allows me to include this farm in my analysis of farm production even though I cannot relate this to the Creightons.

Dunham

The 130 acre Dunham I farm was purchased by Sylvester Dunham in 1879. The 1880 census lists William (31) and Ella (26) as living here. William died in 1885 and Ella and their four-year old son Fred moved to a nearby house. While there is no assemblage strongly associated with this occupation, the historic records give ample insight into the material culture of this young household. Specifically, the probate and
will records from William’s death detail an inventory of items to be left to both his son and wife.

Following William’s death, the farm was operated by Sylvester and Catherine Dunham’s second son, Monroe. After his parents died, Monroe moved to the nearby S. Dunham farm, leaving the Dunham I farm to his son, Minor.

Minor lived in this house from the time of his marriage in 1912, at the age of 19, until around 1920, when his household is listed in Ohio. The 1915 census records Minor (22) living at this farm with his wife Elsie (22) and their infant daughter Gwendolyn. At this site, my analysis will focus on Feature 5, a smokehouse with an abandonment period assemblage. The feature was excavated in five levels, yielding 7047 artifacts and 87 vessels. Based on these vessels, the mean date is 1898, with a TPQ of 1920. These materials are associated with the young household of Minor and Elsie.

Owen

The Dunham II Site was first occupied as a domestic site by the Owen family in 1836. The farm was purchased by Mowbry Owen, and remained in his name, even though his 27 year old son Daniel established and operated the farm. Daniel Owen lived on the property with his wife and four children until his death in 1840. Following his death, his widow and children may have continued to live at the Dunham II Site until about 1845. The Owen household was young, and included both parents and young children. It is also clear from the historic records that there were strong familial ties with other neighboring households. The very fact that the land was purchased and owned by Daniel's father is
testament to this fact. The Owen household is the only occupation associated with the Dunham II Site. The site was investigated with a combination of shovel tests, test excavations, and surface collection. The site represents an ephemeral structure or log cabin. Five features were excavated, and 6439 artifacts and 252 vessels were recovered. The mean date for the vessels was 1834 with a TPQ of 1850.

Wyatt

Abram and Kate Wyatt (nee Knight) were married between 1875 and 1880, and they moved to this farm about the same time as their marriage. In 1880, Abram and Kate were 24 and 21 years old, respectively. They had six children (Nora, Edith, Alice, Florence, Clarence, and Joseph) between 1879 and 1890. The 1900 census lists Kate Wyatt as living on her own in the nearby Town of Montour, and it is not clear where Abram is living. Since she is still listed as married, it seems she and Abram were separated. The Wyatts were a young, newly established family which quickly included children. Their household appears to have encountered dramatic issues that dissolved it as well. The Wyatts also did not have any strongly defined family in the area; Kate's parents lived in a neighboring county, and Abram was born in Pennsylvania.

Rich artifact assemblages from the entire Gardner Site are associated with the Wyatt household. Five features were investigated; a cellar hole, a stone-lined well, a privy, an outbuilding, and a barn addition. The site yielded 12,501 artifacts and 363 vessels, making it one of the larger assemblages from the project. Most of these artifacts
came from deposits associated with the box privy, although the low density sheet midden deposits were also sampled. The vessels have a mean date of 1882 with a TPQ of 1910.

Old Households

Albright

The Albrights provide a unique point of reference for comparison. The 95 acre Albright farm was purchased by John and Catherine Albright in 1865 when John was 52 years old. The farm rests at one of the highest elevations on the Hector Backbone, making this late-life move from their old farm even more difficult to understand. The Albright II Site represents their original log cabin, valued at $15 in 1875. In addition to the Lot 62 farm, the Albrights continued to own a farm on Lot 91, perhaps as a farm for Harrison, their eldest son. Harrison Albright does appear to be operating the farm in 1857, not long before John and Catherine moved, but in 1870 he is no longer listed in Hector. In 1884, the Albright's barn burned down, and in 1886 John died, followed soon by Catherine in 1888. The property was transferred to their son Isaac in 1891. At this time, Isaac lived up the road at a neighboring farm, and it appears that the Albright house was abandoned even though Isaac may have continued to work the farm.

The Albright II Site represents only one occupation, that of the Albrights. The site yielded 5563 artifacts and 122 vessels. The vessel mean date is 1855, with a TPQ of 1880. Most of the artifacts were recovered from sheet midden deposits excavated to clarify a stone floor (Figure 3.4), a foundation wall, a stone-lined well, and a
concentration of lilac bushes. The site was investigated with a combination of shovel tests, test excavations, and surface collection.

Figure 3.4: Stone floor of the Albright house, listed as a log cabin in 1875

Bell

John Bell immigrated from Ireland in 1843. The 1850 census lists John Bell as living with a local farmer. In 1853 he purchased the 95 acre farm from Robert Henry, and in 1855, at the age of 40, he lived there with his wife Isabelle (27) and niece Mary (16) and nephew William (18). The census lists their house as a log cabin valued at $25. The Bells raised three children here; Martha, Ida, and John. In 1886, John’s wife Isabella died, although he continued to live in the house until his death in 1897 at the age of 82. After John Bell’s death, his daughter Martha and her husband Loyal Palmer operated the farm.
Archaeologically, there is one feature (Feature 1) that is relevant to my project. Feature 1 is a bottle deposit at the base of the cellar stairs, and seem to consist of items thrown away after John Bell’s death (Figure 3.5). Feature 1 yielded 135 vessels. The mean date is 1892, with a TPQ of 1915, although most artifacts have a TPQ much earlier than that. The late TPQ indicates that this feature was used well after John Bell’s death, but the significantly earlier mean date implies that the features were possibly used as dumps for his material after he died. Since tying the material to a specific household is tentative, and since the material present is skewed towards bottles, I will not use this assemblage often. However, when discussing bottles, the Bell material, which is predominantly from the older household of John Bell, will be included.

![Figure 3.5: Feature 1 stairs from the Bell house](image)

The Purdy-Velie Site was first owned by the Purdy family around 1860. This family owned the farm until it was acquired by Charles Velie in 1911, when he was 46 years old. According to 1915 population census data Charles (50) lived at the site with
his wife Adelia (60) and son William (19) in 1915. In 1930, Charles Velie (64) lived in
the house with another older man, James Marshall (65). Overall, this site is one that also
represents an older household. The 1939 acquisition record lists the farm as having a
number of buildings, all listed as 50 years old, as well as a newer dug well and concrete
curb. Charles Velie died in 1944. Feature 3, a springhouse with associated refuse and
dump, is associated with Charles Velie’s occupation. The feature yielded 6631 artifacts
and 107 vessels from nine levels. The mean date is 1889, with a TPQ of 1916.

Transitional Households

Broderick

The Broderick occupation of the Albright farm began in 1897, the same year that
Herman (29) and Maude (24) were married. They built a new house, privy, and well.
The site was composed of 10 features, including a cellar hole, a stone-lined well, a privy
(Figure 3.6), two outbuildings, a barn complex, a rock pile, a drilled well, a stone path,
and a barnyard wall. The site was investigated with shovel tests, test excavations, and
surface collection. Agricultural census data does not cover this period, but we do know
the farm was sold for unpaid taxes in 1925. However, it seems as though Herman and
Maude continued to live in this house until 1930. While initially a young household, this
33 year occupation will provide a way to examine how these changes occurred in a single
household as it transitioned from what I have regarded as a younger to an older
household. Herman and Maude Broderick were similar to the household of John and
Catherine Albright in that they were older and apparently lived without any children. However, the occupation was later in date than John and Catherine Albright.

![Image](image.png)

Figure 3.6: Privy (Feature 3) at the Broderick house

All of the materials recovered from the Albright I Site are associated with the 33 year Broderick occupation. The site yielded 171 vessels and 5031 artifacts. The mean date for these vessels is 1900, with a TPQ of 1930.

Mattison

Lewis Mattison was running the Lee farm in 1890 as virtually the last member of the Lee family in the area. While the Lees were an extended family, by the time Lewis Mattison built a new house on the Lee farm, they had mostly died or moved away. Lewis married Amanda in the mid-1890s, and they had three children over the next twenty years. Lewis Mattison sold the farm to the government in 1937 when he was 78 years old. This household is an example of one that transitioned from a young, single man, to a family with several children, and ultimately to an older couple. It is not clear when
Amanda Mattison died. All of these drastically different households are represented by
the same family, with the primary focus around Lewis Mattison.

Investigations of the Lee II Site identified three features; a cellar hole, a porch
addition, and a small outbuilding which is likely a garage. There were 2864 artifacts
recovered, and 96 vessels. The vessels suggest a mean date of 1909, with a TPQ of 1936.

Wickham

The Wickham family represents a large extended family network on the Hector
Backbone. The Wickham Farm was owned by this family from 1837 when it was
acquired by Erastus Wickham until the death of his son Charles Wickham in 1911. This
site represents this single family's occupation for almost a century, and is represented by
both archaeological material and historic records (Figure 3.7). During this occupation,
these households developed and aged from young to old.

Fifteen features at the Wickham farm yielded 13,340 artifacts and 282 vessels,
which is all associated with the long occupation of the Wickham family. The features
recorded include the cellar hole, a cistern, a stone-lined well, two house additions, a
smokehouse, a privy, three outbuildings, a root cellar, a barn, a shed, a brick pile with
associated sheet midden, and a surface midden. The mean date for the vessels is 1875,
with a TPQ of 1915.

I will draw from these sites throughout the course of my discussion, using the
sites that best illustrate the points I am considering for each analytical focus (Table 3.7).
The next three chapters will examine how household age, as both a category and a
process, influenced consumer behavior. In Chapter 4, I will compare the Wyatt, Albright, and Owen households to highlight major ways household age impacted consumption. In Chapter 5, I will expand my discussion to include the Creighton, Velie, Bell and Dunham households to explore age as a discreet classification. In Chapter 6, I will look bring the remaining assemblages in to the analysis to view aging as a process.

Figure 3.7: Farm view image of the Wickham farm (Everts and Ensign 1879)
Table 3.6: Sites and occupations used in archaeological analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site/Occupation</th>
<th>Years of Occupation</th>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>Number of Vessels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Dunham/Creighton</td>
<td>1925-1937</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunham I/Dunham</td>
<td>1900-1913</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunham II/Owen</td>
<td>1835-1845</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardner/Wyatt</td>
<td>1877-1904</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albright II/Albright</td>
<td>1865-1888</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell/Bell</td>
<td>1853-1937</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purdy-Velie/Velie</td>
<td>1900-1935</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albright I/Broderick</td>
<td>1897-1930</td>
<td>Long term</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee II/Mattison</td>
<td>1880-1937</td>
<td>Long term</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wickham/Wickham</td>
<td>1837-1911</td>
<td>Long term</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since my thesis aims to explore how consumer behavior is related to household age, it would seem obvious to extricate young and old households for comparison. As the modern consumer culture emerged throughout the nineteenth century it underwent dramatic changes. These changes include both the material and immaterial. As new types of materials and items became available, their availability increased while their cost decreased. Items such as new ceramic types, new types of decoration (and the popularity of these different decorations), mass-produced items like toys and canning jars, and more readily available packaging items such as tin cans and bottles all emerged on the landscape of consumption over this century (Miller 1980; Rinehart 2010; Lima 2012; Rotman 2012). In the twentieth century, even more dramatic changes occurred, with the introduction of the automobile, telephone, radio, and electricity (Kline 2000). These changes were not only material, but also ideological, with changes in notions about gender, age, class, and status (Stine 1990; Scanlon 1995; Spencer-Wood 1999; O’Donovan and Wurst 2002). Given the dramatic transformations in consumer culture through the 19th century, I must first control for these temporal differences. To examine the ramifications of the temporal change, I will begin with a comparison of two young households that date to very different time periods; the Wyatt and Owen households.
Owen versus Wyatt

Both the Wyatts and Owens were young households with numerous children. They both moved into the respective farms shortly after marriage, and both started out in their early or middle twenties. The Owen household had four children living there, and the Wyatts had six total. The Wyatt occupation lasted longer (27 years to the 10 year Owen occupation) but both yielded some of the largest assemblages in the sample. The vessels from both sites suggest similar patterns of behavior. The dates for ceramic vessels are strikingly close to the beginning of the occupations-1879 for the Wyatt’s vessels and 1834 for the Owens. It would appear that, despite the other differences, both assemblages are marked by a major acquisition of new ceramics at the start of the occupation.

Given the similarities in family and household structure, the differences between the archaeological assemblages of the Owen and Wyatt households are striking. The most obvious difference is that the Wyatt assemblage has roughly twice the number of artifacts as Owens (Table 4.1). However, this is a gross comparison and does not account for differences in investigation or the fact that the Wyatt occupation lasted significantly longer than the Owen occupation. Standardizing the vessel sample by years of occupation, we see that the Wyatt assemblage has 13 vessels per year, while the Owens’ yielded roughly twice that, 25 vessels per year. Considering the later time period, we may have expected that the Wyatt family exhibited a higher level of consumption. At first glance the size of the assemblage and number of vessels suggests that the Wyatts were more actively engaged in consumer culture. However, the vessels per year indicates that
both families were actively consuming, and that 25 vessels per year for the Owen household shows that they were actually consuming (or at least breaking) more.

Other materials show other differences. The Wyatts, with 120 glass bottles and canning jars, exceeded the Owens’ 13 for these types of goods. This pattern is hardly surprising, since during the time period of the Owen’s occupation glass vessels were rare and canning jars had not been invented. This pattern likely has little to do with household age itself, but instead represents a major temporal difference, as later sites see an increase in particular types of material either rare or non-existent previously. Another example of this difference is in the types of materials represented (Table 4.2). The increased amount of tin cans in the Wyatt material is almost certainly attributable to the later dates of occupation, as is the prevalence of glass vessels.

Table 4.1: Overview of Wyatt and Owen assemblages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wyatt family</th>
<th>Owen family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young household</td>
<td>Young household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877-1905</td>
<td>1835-1845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12,501 artifacts</td>
<td>6,493 artifacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>363 vessels</td>
<td>253 vessels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 vessels per year</td>
<td>25 vessels per year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: Materials from the Wyatt and Owen assemblages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Porcelain vessels (n)</th>
<th>Glass vessels (n)</th>
<th>Tin cans (g)</th>
<th>White-bodied earthenware (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other differences between the assemblages can be discerned. The Wyatt ceramic assemblage is much more diverse than the Owen’s, in both materials and decorations.
represented. The Wyatts had a much larger percentage of porcelain vessels (14% of consumer durables compared to 1% for the Owen assemblage) and had much lower rates of decoration for the white-bodied earthenwares (Table 4.2 and Table 4.3). They also had slightly more variety in ceramic forms and decoration than the Owens (Table 4.4). The Owen’s ceramics were heavily dominated by white-bodied earthenwares, including a significant amount of pearlware (54 of 167 vessels). Of these, most are decorated, as indicated by a very low undecorated-to-decorated ratio (Table 4.3).

The assemblages exhibit both similarities and differences in the vessels as well. The Wyatt assemblage has more different forms represented, but the general trend of how common these vessels are is quite similar (Figure 4.1). The most striking difference between these two sites is the relative paucity of teacups from the Wyatt household.

Table 4.3: Ceramic decoration for Wyatt and Owen assemblages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Owen (%)</th>
<th>Undec:Dec</th>
<th>Wyatt (%)</th>
<th>Undec:Dec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WBE</td>
<td>79.46</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>58.03</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porcelain</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4: Diversity in ceramic form and decoration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ceramic forms</th>
<th>Decoration types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were similar patterns in the materials represented (Figure 4.2). White-
bodied earthenware and stonewares are present in both assemblages at similar rates, while glass and porcelain are more common in the Wyatt assemblage. This pattern is not surprising, given the later dates of the Wyatt occupation. The Owen assemblage contained a quantity of the older material creamware.

Figure 4.1: Ceramic form frequencies

In addition, the Wyatts had a larger number of toys (Figure 4.3). Since both households had young children in the household, this difference is likely related to the
development of a separate material culture for children that developed through the 19th century (McMurry 1988; Gelber 1999; Lima 2012). The types of toys represented were fairly diverse as well (Table 4.5). The number of dolls is partially misleading, as this represents several fragments. The Wyatt household had at least five dolls recovered. The animal toys from the Wyatt assemblage were circus elephants. The large number of dolls and doll dishes may relate to the large number of girls in the Wyatt family; four of the six children were girls. Given this, it is almost odd that there are as many stereotypically male toys, particularly guns, although such assignments are not without their uncertainties (Tuohy 2000; Lima 2012).

While the ceramics exhibited both similarities and differences, the bottles were surprisingly similar between the two households despite the increased use of bottles as packaging in the later 19th century. The frequency of bottles remained low for both sites, but was a larger percentage of the vessel deposition for the Wyatts (three bottles per year from the Wyatt material compared to one bottle per year from the Owens). Despite the difference in dates, these sites are surprisingly similar in the types of bottles represented (Table 4.6); they have almost identical rates of alcohol and medicinal bottles.

The Owen and Wyatt households are very similar in many respects. They are both younger households, both had numerous children, both assemblages were very large and diverse and suggested high rates of consumption, and both household occupations ended suddenly. By leveraging these similarities, I have compared the two sites to highlight the differences. Particularly, I have been trying to draw out differences between the
households based on their drastically different time period. How consumption changed over time is revealed by a quick comparison of vessels at three young households. These patterns are strengthened with a quick comparison of a slightly later young household. The Creighton household is utilized here to extend the temporal comparison from the early 19\textsuperscript{th} century into the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century. By doing this, the patterns suggested by the Owen/Wyatt comparison stand out in starker contrast. As is evident (Figure 4.4), consumption patterns shift from almost entirely durable consumer goods, such as tableware and food preparation vessels, to predominantly bottles.

![Figure 4.2: Vessel material diversity for Owen and Wyatt assemblages](image)

Figure 4.2: Vessel material diversity for Owen and Wyatt assemblages
Figure 4.3: Examples of toys from the Wyatt household

Table 4.5: Toys from Wyatt households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Toy</th>
<th>Wyatt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Train</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marble</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doll</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doll dish</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toy gun</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6: Percent of bottle type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Owen</th>
<th>Wyatt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other beverage</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicinal</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foods</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td>13 vessels</td>
<td>76 vessels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several key differences are evident in the comparison between the Owen and Wyatt households which relate to the time period of their occupation. First, with the advent of new materials and new production methods, certain items became much more common. These include tin cans and glass bottles as well as porcelain. Second, changing
consumption patterns seem to have led to an increase in specialty items, such as children's toys, which link to broader societal ideas about childhood and work, which changed along with the introduction of consumer culture. Finally, the overall diversity of the Wyatt material is much greater than the Owens. These comparisons relate to the differences between two young households at different points in time, which caution us against simplistic assumptions that all young households engage in similar patterns of consumption. We must remember that time period may play a crucial role in explaining these patterns. In order to add more complexity to our understanding of consumption and household I will compare the young Wyatt occupation to a contemporaneous occupation by the older household of John and Catherine Albright.

Variation in Consumer Behavior: Albrights and Wyatts

Additional insight into the factors affecting consumer choice can be gleaned by comparing the Wyatt material to that of the Albrights. Both of these site assemblages date to the same period and represent similar occupation lengths. However, while the Wyatts were a young household, the Albrights were quite a bit older.

A coarse comparison in the sizes of the assemblages suggests that, for whatever reason, the Wyatts had a much richer artifact assemblage, suggesting that they were more actively involved in a consumer culture than the Albrights. In the following paragraphs, I will lay out some of the key differences between these two assemblages which emphasize the choices these two households were making (Table 4.7).

Several rough patterns between these two sites suggest marked differences in
consumer behavior. On the one hand, the Albright’s occupation yielded relatively few artifacts (n=5,563 and 122 vessels), while the Wyatts offered one of the richest and most diverse assemblages recovered from the Hector Backbone (12,501 artifacts and 363 vessels).

Table 4.7: Overview of Albright and Wyatt assemblages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Albright family</th>
<th>Wyatt family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Older household</td>
<td>1865-1888</td>
<td>1877-1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,563 artifacts</td>
<td>122 vessels</td>
<td>12,501 artifacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122 vessels</td>
<td>363 vessels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 vessels per year</td>
<td>13 vessels per year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 ceramic forms</td>
<td>21 ceramic forms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These differences appear even greater when standardized by vessel per year (Table 4.8). In the previous sections we saw that the Wyatts had a much lower rate of deposition than the Owens, but this rate appears much higher when compared to the older family of John and Catherine Albright. The Albrights evidenced lower figures for all types of vessels compared to the Wyatts.

Table 4.8: Vessels per year of occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Vessels</th>
<th>Bottles</th>
<th>Durables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albright</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ceramics are ubiquitous at all of the sites on the Backbone and were for all intents and purposes a necessity for both food preparation and consumption. However, the types of ceramics can suggest more or less participation in consumer culture, and the diversity
of the assemblages speaks to this. The Albrights had a significantly smaller ceramic assemblage; 80 vessels compared to Wyatt's 193. Despite this difference, the relative proportions of the different ceramics are surprisingly similar. The occurrence of white-bodied earthenwares (whiteware and ironstone) are almost identical at just below two-thirds of the assemblage, while utilitarian vessels (earthenwares and stonewares) account for about 15%. The only major difference between the two assemblages is the porcelain in the Wyatt material. This difference may suggest an intriguing divide between consumption for more every day purposes by the Albrights versus more elaborate and socially invested consumption by the Wyatts.

This interpretation is bolstered when the ceramic dates are considered. The vessels from the Wyatt assemblage all dated to the general time period of the occupation. The ceramic mean date was 1879, while the bottles dated to 1909. This difference is unsurprising, as it suggests the ceramics were acquired at roughly the beginning of the occupation, about the time the Wyatts married, while the bottles accumulated over the entire occupation.

The Albright assemblage reveals a much different pattern. The bottles have a mean date of 1884, with a TPQ of 1880. In contrast, the ceramics, have a mean date of 1846 and a TPQ of 1858. Both of these dates fall significantly before the occupation at this farm began. The most likely interpretation is that the Albrights brought these vessels with them from their Lot 91 farm. The implication for consumer behavior is that the
young, newly formed household is more likely to have ceramics that date to the time of
their marriage or the beginning of the occupation. It is possible that the Albrights
acquired their ceramics early too, and then kept them. The sudden dissolution of the
Wyatt household may account for the visibility of this household startup, an event masked
by several decades of marriage and a household relocation for the Albrights.

An examination of the decoration of these vessels adds additional nuance to this
picture. The white-bodied earthenwares of the Albrights were mostly decorated,
indicated by the low Undecorated:Decorated ratio (Table 4.9). In contrast, the Wyatt’s
material was almost the opposite, with a high ratio of undecorated vessels. The Wyatts’
porcelain was, perhaps surprisingly, mostly undecorated. These differences are
significant given the similar dates of occupation and the commonality of ceramic style
popularity.

Table 4.9: Ceramic material and decoration diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Albright (%)</th>
<th>Undec:Dec</th>
<th>Wyatt (%)</th>
<th>Undec:Dec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WBE</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porcelain</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The diversity of vessel form is also markedly different. The Wyatt family had a
much more diverse assemblage of ceramics, representing 21 different ceramic forms
compared to the 14 forms the Albrights had (Table 4.7). This pattern would suggest yet
again that the Albrights were not as invested in elaborate consumption. The Wyatts, in
contrast, purchased more expensive ceramics such as porcelains and had a wider array of ceramic forms. This higher vessel diversity is also evident in their glassware. While the small sample size of glass vessels from both assemblages make any conclusions based on this pattern tentative, there is a clear pattern in the use of glassware. The Albrights had seven glassware vessels, mostly tumblers but also a glass stopper and a bowl. In contrast the Wyatt assemblage yielded 21 glass vessels, which includes tumblers, a variety of pitchers and pressed bowls and platters. Yet again, we see that the Wyatt household was purchasing more than the Albrights.

Differences between these households are also evident in their bottle assemblages (Table 4.10). While ceramics were purchased as items in their own right, glass bottles were purchased as containers for other products. While over half of the bottles from both assemblages were not identifiable, there are still distinctive patterns. If the unidentified bottles are removed, the Albright assemblage was 80% medicinal bottles. The Wyatt assemblage also contained a fair amount of medicinal bottles (about 40%), but also had more alcohol bottles (about 49%), as well as other beverage bottles. This demonstrates that the Wyatts were purchasing more beverage items than the Albrights, who prioritized medicinal bottles and prepackaged condiments. That these are medicinal bottles suggests declining health for the Albrights, perhaps resulting in John’s death in 1886.

Another significant distinction between the two sites is in the realm of food production and consumption (Table 4.11). Evidence for these behaviors can be seen in several types of material culture, such as purchased food containers, including glass bottles and tin cans. Canning jars represent a way in which food was preserved, as do the
food preparation vessels. Table 4.11 demonstrates that the Wyatt family was much more active in canning behavior and in purchasing food, represented by tin cans. The Albrights had a higher percentage of food preparation vessels, mostly crocks, suggesting more behaviors associated with more traditional food preservation methods. In addition to canning, the Wyatts more commonly purchased prepackaged food in tin cans. While the Owen material lacked any tin cans due to the early dates of occupation, it was clearly a consumer choice for the Wyatts and Albrights.

Table 4.10: Bottle type variation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Albright</th>
<th>Wyatt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Beverage</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicinal</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foods</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.11: Food preparation material

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tin Can Weight</th>
<th>Canning Jar Vessels</th>
<th>Food Prep Vessels (% of all durables)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albright</td>
<td>20g</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt</td>
<td>834g</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The choices these households made in their consumption were inextricably linked to the choices in production. At first glance, the differences between the Albrights and Wyatts seem much more pronounced in their consumption than in their production. The Wyatt farm was significantly more improved than the Albrights and valued more highly (Table 4.12). However, the Albright farm did have a larger number of acres under
cultivation-75 compared to the Wyatt’s 47. The two families reported machine values at around $100, although this represented 7% of the Wyatt's farm value as opposed to 4% of the Albright's.

Table 4.12: 1880 agricultural schedule data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Acres</th>
<th>% Land improved</th>
<th>Value per acre</th>
<th>Machine Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>$36</td>
<td>$120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albright</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>$29</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This preliminary analysis has revealed several major differences between the younger Wyatt family and the older Albright family. Overall, the Wyatt household was much more active in consumer culture, as evidenced by several aspects of the data. The Wyatts purchased more diverse and expensive ceramics, porcelains, while the Albrights favored decorated white-bodied earthenwares. The Wyatts also bought a more diverse array of bottled goods, while the Albrights primarily bought bottled medicines. In general, the Wyatts also seemed more apt to purchase prepackaged foods in the form of bottled and jarred foods and tin cans.

In this chapter I compared the Wyatt household with two other sites to highlight different issues. The comparison between the Wyatt and Owen assemblages emphasized the differences that the time period of occupation can cause. This comparison cautions our later discussion against simplistic assumptions centered around age, and encourages us to keep in mind the myriad facets that undoubtedly result in different consumer behaviors. However, in order to frame my discussion for the importance household age
and lifecycle does play in consumer behavior, I then compared the Wyatt material to the Albright household. By doing this I compared a young and old household from the same time period. The differences and similarities between these two sites demonstrated that household age and lifecycle are important to consider when examining consumer behavior.

I have isolated these differences in age and temporality with simple comparisons between three sites. Keeping these factors in mind, in the next chapter I will explore the ways in which age is a relevant framework for understanding these differences in consumption. By increasing the sample size for comparison and adding complexity to the analysis, I will examine the influence age had on the choices made by the households. I will begin by treating age as a demarcated category, and use young and old households to explore how this difference impacted consumer behaviors. To be clear, I am not seeking to provide a definitive or universal answer, or to put one of these factors above all others. Furthermore, while there is much to be learned from a more detailed analysis of the data, my goal is to highlight the interaction of multiple issues to frame the choices these households made, both as consumers and as producers. To accomplish this, I will focus on broad patterns and trends between the sites.
Gross differences have emerged between the Wyatt and Albright households. These are drastically different households, and my argument is that these household differences were a significant influence on their consumer behavior. In this chapter, I will further explore through the material culture how households of different ages interacted differently with consumer culture. Other factors, such as wealth and class, are certainly relevant to consumer choice, but I will not be focusing on them.

In order to discuss the role household age and lifecycle played in shaping the choices these households made as producers and consumers, I will analyze them in relation to several other households in the area. By using a larger sample than in the previous chapter, the differences and similarities between households of different ages will be better defined. While there are many types of material culture that could play an interesting role in my discussion, I have narrowed my analysis to several major categories to highlight the big picture comparison. First I will examine major differences between the sites using overall vessel and bottle assemblages. After that, issues of food preparation, purchase, and service will be explored. I will then closely examine the ceramics from the site, and in particular compare the diversity of the forms, materials, and decoration of the ceramics and how these relate to consumer choice. Then I will look at a
number of different categories of material culture that, while individually do not warrant
detailed analysis, when combined give further insight into the variation between these
households. Finally, I will examine these farms, and their consumer choices, in terms of
their productive output and evidence for improvement and repair to the farm's productive
capacity.

In order to explore the role of age in consumer choice, I will be analyzing the
Owen, Wyatt and Albright assemblages introduced in the previous chapter alongside
several others, including the Dunhams and Creightons, representing young households,
and the Velies, another example of an old household (Table 5.1). As a gross
categorization, household age was explored in the previous chapter by contrasting the
young Wyatt household to the old Albright household. By expanding the sample size,
household age will be more fully explored in the ways it does and does not explain
different consumer behaviors.

Overall Vessel and Bottle Analysis

The differences between these sites are evident in multiple ways. The range of
dates is suggestive of several larger trends (Figure 5.1). The older Albright and Velie
households both have mean dates for the durables that significantly predate the
occupation. Both of these households acquired the attendant farm well after they initially
established their families as well. In contrast, the Wyatt and Owen households, which are
two of the largest and most diverse assemblages in the sample, have ceramic dates much closer to the beginning of their occupation. This correlation is likely evidence of the initial establishment of their households, which is highly visible archaeologically due to the short nature of the occupations and sudden dissolution of the families. The patterns for the Dunham and Creighton families are slightly different still, and are in fact more similar to the older households. On the surface, these patterns would indicate that household age may not be an important factor. In Chapter 7 I will argue that the familial networks played a more significant role than age in shaping these behaviors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Occupation Period</th>
<th>Bottle Dates (Mean/TPQ)</th>
<th>Durable Goods Dates (Mean/TPQ)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creighton</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>1925-1937</td>
<td>1910 1929</td>
<td>1900 1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>1877-1904</td>
<td>1878 1870</td>
<td>1879 1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunham</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>1913-1919</td>
<td>1913 1911</td>
<td>1892 1902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>1835-1845</td>
<td>1841 1800</td>
<td>1834 1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albright</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>1865-1888</td>
<td>1880 1880</td>
<td>1846 1858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velie</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>1911-1939</td>
<td>1896 1903</td>
<td>1884 1915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The size of the assemblages, as well as an examination of vessels per year, shows some strong patterns (Table 5.2). Looking at these assemblages, one gross pattern emerges quickly. The younger households of the Owens, Dunhams, Creightons, and Wyatts have much higher rates of vessel deposition than do the older households of the
Albrights and Velies (Table 5.3). Looking specifically at the bottles, the same site similarities are visible in these patterns. The Creightons and Wyatts have much larger bottle assemblages. When this pattern is compared to the rate of bottle deposition, however, these similarities start to vanish. Bottle deposition rates at all the sites are below 4 bottles per year, with the notable exception of the Creightons, at 10 bottles per year. This pattern suggests that the major difference between young and old households is in the durable and canning jar categories.

![Figure 5.1: Mean dates compared to occupation date ranges](image)

Table 5.4 presents data on the percentages of various types of bottles. As we saw in the previous chapter, the Wyatts and Owens are strikingly similar. It is interesting that despite the increased availability of bottles for Wyatts in the latter half of the 19th century,
the rate at which different items were purchased remained the same. The Bell and Albright assemblages, meanwhile, are both dominated by a large amount of medicinal bottles-twice that of the other sites. This data is not surprising when the sites occupants are considered. The Albrights were already over 50 when they established the farm, and there is nothing too novel about the idea that an older couple would use more medicines. The Velie household, while categorized as old, deviates from this pattern. However, the unusually high percentage of the assemblage that was unidentified (about 50%) makes the rates of the other bottles less significant.

Table 5.2: Vessel summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th># of Vessels</th>
<th># of Bottles</th>
<th>Durable Vessels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creighton</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunham</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albright</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velie</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3: Vessel per year figures for select types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Vessels/year</th>
<th>Bottles/year</th>
<th>Durables/year</th>
<th>Canning jars/year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creighton</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunham</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albright</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velie</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.4: Percentages of bottle type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Creighton</th>
<th>Wyatt</th>
<th>Owen</th>
<th>Dunham</th>
<th>Bell</th>
<th>Albright</th>
<th>Velie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>Old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverage</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicinal</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foods</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unidentified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bottles represented a significant portion of all the assemblages except the Owens. That there was not a strong bottle assemblage is not surprising, since the early dates would make bottles much rarer than at the other sites. This data suggests an overall pattern for the old households to purchase more medicine and the young households to purchase more alcohol. However, both the Velie and Dunham households fall outside of this pattern. To some extent this is likely due to the small sample sizes at Dunham and Velie, as well as a large percentage of unidentified bottles at Velie. A major deviation from the general trend is the Creighton household. While the rates of alcohol and medicinal bottles are a bit lower, the rate of food bottles is quite a bit higher. This site had a remarkably high rate of bottle deposition and food bottles accounted for 30% of all the vessels at the site.
To the Table: Food Production, Purchase, and Service

During the development of consumer culture, the ways in which households acquired and produced food changed drastically, particularly on farms. As farms specialized, their reliance on foods produced and packaged as consumer goods increased. The ways which households interacted with this new suite of commodities speak to their relationship not only with consumer culture, but with their farm’s production. By considering the entire gamut of food consumption, I hope to marry together aspects typically regarded as food consumption with what is generally regarded as production. I will begin with a discussion of durable goods, particularly focusing on food preparation and storage and service vessels. I will then expand to include ideas of food purchase and food production.

Percentages of food-related durable consumer goods, which are objects in their own right rather than containers for other commodities, are presented in Table 5.5. In general, assemblages are composed of predominantly tea and table wares (such as saucers, plates, and teacups), with a smaller amount of food preparation and storage (such as crocks, jugs, and pie plates). Food service (platters, serving bowls, teapots, etc.) vessels are typically significantly lower. The most striking pattern in this data is that most of the sites are virtually indistinguishable. The fact that all of these households had similar percentages of these types of vessels, regardless of age, is not surprising. These tea and table wares represent vessels used by individual diners, and the different types of vessels served the same functional purposes. It would be expected that any household
would require a minimum amount of each type, resulting in these similar profiles. The Creighton household is intriguing for how it diverges from this general pattern. Food service vessels at the Creighton household, and to a lesser extent the Wyatts and Velies as well, are much higher than elsewhere, as is table glass (tumblers, drinking glasses, glass pitchers), with a corresponding drop in food prep vessels and tea and tablewares. The connection between tea and table wares and table glass is to be expected, since these vessel types served similar functional purposes and were primarily distinguished by material.

Table 5.5: Durable consumer goods vessel types percentage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Creighton</th>
<th>Dunham</th>
<th>Owen</th>
<th>Wyatt</th>
<th>Albright</th>
<th>Velie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>Old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Prep</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea/Table</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table Glass</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Size (n)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The higher rates of food service vessels suggests more emphasis by this younger family on formal or social dining. The specifics of these vessels bolster this interpretation (Table 5.6). Eight different food service forms are represented in the Creighton assemblage: serving vessels, a castor bottle, a relish dish, a salt shaker, two sugar bowls, and a celery vase as well as pitchers and serving bowls. These specialized forms speak to
the investment the household made in social dining, and is reflected in the higher percentage of food service vessels in this assemblage. The other young households of the Wyatts and Owens, along with the old household of the Velies, all show similar patterns in form diversity. The Albright material has only two forms, suggesting a link between age and service vessels. The Dunham household yielded little food service as well, although this may be at least partially due to the small sample size.

Table 5.6: Durable consumer vessel forms represented

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Owen</th>
<th>Creighton</th>
<th>Wyatt</th>
<th>Dunham</th>
<th>Albright</th>
<th>Velie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slop Bowl</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teapot</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creamer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar Bowl</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitcher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teapot Lid</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relish Dish</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt Shaker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lid</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter Dish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celery Vase</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compote</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castor Bottle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another commodity that became more common during this time period is food itself (DuPuis 2000). Tin cans and food bottles are evidence of purchased food, while canning jars and food preparation and storage vessels are indicative of food processing and storage. In the previous chapter, stark differences between the Albrights and Wyatts
were evident. The Albrights had virtually no tin cans or canning jars, but had a higher rate of food preparation vessels.

There appears to be a strong link between these items and the age of the households (Table 5.7). The younger households, with the exception of the Owens, had higher concentrations of tin cans as well as higher numbers of both canning jars and bottles which contained food items. All of these represent ways in which food was purchased as a commodity and then kept or used. While this pattern is intriguing, it does not correlate directly with age. The lack of these materials associated with the Owens is likely attributable to the early years of occupation, when these materials were simply unavailable. However, John and Catherine Albright certainly could have purchased their food, but opted not to. Charles Velie likewise did not have a large number of tin cans present, but did have a large assemblage of canning jars. The pre-packaged food which emerged in stores in the late 19th century, represented by tin cans and food bottles, seems to have been preferred by young households.

The various types associated with food production seem to occur in patterned ways. Food preparation and storage vessels, representing an older method of food production, are higher where these other categories are lower, specifically at the Owens and Albrights. There are numerous specific forms of these vessels, but the most common are crocks and jugs. When the number of vessels are controlled for length of occupation,
we find that most of the sites have approximately one vessel per year, suggesting consistent frequencies of food preparation and storage vessels. The Owen household represents a major anomaly from this trend, at over five vessels per year. The majority that were identifiable to a specific form were, surprisingly, footed bowls, which suggests that their use may not have been strictly food preparation or storage.

Table 5.7: Food purchase and preparation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Tin Cans (g)</th>
<th>Canning Jars (n)</th>
<th>Food Bottles (n)</th>
<th>Food Prep (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creighton</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunham</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>3184</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albright</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velie</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In food production and consumption and food service, the Creightons stand out with the clear purchase of more bottled food. These foods included mayonnaise, jellies, and extracts. The site also exhibited a sizable amount of tin cans, supporting the interpretation that they were purchasing food. What is perhaps most interesting about this evidence for purchased food is the suggestion that they were using this food as a basis for formal or social interaction, based on the significantly higher proportion of food service vessels associated with the Creightons.

Ceramic Vessel Diversity

In addition to the ceramics discussed above, there are distinct patterns in the other ceramics that relate to household age, particularly in material and decoration (Tables 5.8
and 5.9). Across all the sites, white-bodied earthenwares dominate the tea and table ware vessel assemblages, with smaller amounts of porcelain. The two exceptions to this are the Albright and Owen households-two houses drastically different in age. Both of these assemblages contained almost exclusively white-bodied earthenwares. As we saw in Chapter 4, ceramic decoration and material seems to relate more to time period than household age. These two households both seem to have purchased their ceramics much earlier than the other households, circa 1840. The trend towards white-bodied earthenware is likely a representation of the time when the ceramics were purchased.

Table 5.8: Tea and tableware vessel materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Creighton</th>
<th>Owen</th>
<th>Wyatt</th>
<th>Dunham</th>
<th>Albright</th>
<th>Velie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White-bodied earthenwares</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>Old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 (86.2%)</td>
<td>144 (98.6%)</td>
<td>76 (71.0%)</td>
<td>15 (88%)</td>
<td>54 (100%)</td>
<td>34 (89%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porcelain</td>
<td>1 (3.4%)</td>
<td>2 (1.4%)</td>
<td>31 (29.0%)</td>
<td>2 (12%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>3 (10.3%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.9: White-bodied earthenwares, teaware and tableware decoration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Creighton</th>
<th>Owen</th>
<th>Wyatt</th>
<th>Dunham</th>
<th>Albright</th>
<th>Velie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decorated</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>Old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecorated</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Decorated</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the households examined here had at most five different types of ceramic decoration represented. The most common forms of decoration are molded and transfer
print, with undecorated being common as well (Figure 5.2). The Wyatts had an overwhelming eight types of decoration present in the ceramics. While this includes the common varieties listed above, it also includes the only example of majolica and a large portion of decal. The Wyatt’s white-bodied earthenware vessels are mostly undecorated (44 of 112), while the most common decoration is transfer print in various patterns as well as other decorations. This variation suggest that the Wyatts did not purchase matching sets, but rather a mixture of what was available.

![Figure 5.2: Decorated white-bodied earthenwares from the Owen household](image)

Looking at major vessel types across numerous households has led to several consistent patterns relating to age of the households. While the availability of bottles increased through time, households tended to favor distinct patterns in their consumption. Younger households tended to purchase more alcohol, while older households favored
medicines. The overall rates of consumption at younger households were consistently higher, and often included an increased focus on purchased food and food service vessels. In addition, the households tended to stock their dishes early in their existence. This behavior is most clearly visible in households with short occupations and sudden terminations, such as the Owens and Wyatts, while the longer a household was extant the more heavily masked this behavior becomes. All these patterns both underscore the importance of a household’s age to their consumer behavior and highlight the myriad ways in which it is complicated by other factors.

So far I have focused my analysis on vessels of durable consumer goods and bottles. This analysis has demonstrated the more elaborate and socially invested consumption patterns of younger households. Now I will shift focus and examine the probate records for the household of William Dunham. While there was no strong material assemblage associated with these occupants, William and Ella Dunham’s consumption can be examined using probate records. Following William Dunham's death in 1885, an extensive inventory of his property was undertaken. The majority of it was set aside until his son, Fred Dunham, came of age, with a portion kept by his widow, Ella. The property set aside for Fred included

one sewing machine, two stoves, one family bible, four pictures, one algebra, one philosophy, one fifth reader, one dictionary, one doctor book, Life of Horace Greely, one book Best Thoughts and Discoveries; ten sheep, one cow, ½ barrel pork, one bed and bedding, two bedsteads, two kettles, one frying pan, one tea kettle, all necessary wearing apparel, six chairs, eleven knives, seven forks, 10 plates, twelve teacups and saucers, one sugar dish, one milk pot, one tea pot (Surrogate Court of Schuyler County 1885).
The portion set aside for Ella (Table 5.10) included a wide array of items and included the monetary value of these goods. From these lists, several observations can be made. It is clear from the first list that William Dunham was invested in his son's education, who was only four at the time of his father’s death. In addition to standard education books, such as algebra and philosophy, William left Fred with a copy of the *Life of Horace Greeley*, a political reformer and founder of the Liberal Republican party. William also left Fred with a sundry list of items to help him participate in his social world, including not only “all necessary wearing apparel” but also items like tea service and tableware and even a sewing machine.

The items kept by Ella paint a picture of the household and the behaviors it engaged in at the time of William's death. Food production and storage were clearly an important facet of this household. In addition to 22 empty canning jars, there were also four stoneware jugs, numerous pie plates and an egg beater, a churn and strainer pail, and a fair amount of foodstuffs prepared for storage: 30 cans of fruit, half barrels of cider, salt, and vinegar, and two kegs of boiled cider.

It is intriguing that this list of goods for his wife contain very little in the way of tea or table wares. These were instead specifically given to his son, as was a basic set of livestock and a sewing machine. Ella, in contrast, received the food service and preservation vessels. Of course, since Fred was four, all of these goods would have remained in the same household. Despite this fact, the decisions William made when he divided up his property are interesting.
William Dunham’s household, and evidently his wife specifically, was clearly very involved in food preservation. The basic materials and vessels required to preserve, as well as a large amount of salt and vinegar, are all testament to the household’s predilection for this behavior. This pattern fits with other young households from this time period, which all had more evidence for canning and preserving (Table 5.10).

Table 5.10: Property set aside for Ella Dunham (Surrogate Court of Schuyler County 1885)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listed Property</th>
<th>Value ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26 yards carpet @.50 per yard . 30 yards carpet @.15 per yard</td>
<td>17.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One hanging lamp &amp; bracket</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One center table &amp; 2 clothes</td>
<td>6.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One couch, 1 lounge</td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 empty fruit cans $1.25, ½ doz. milk pans .30</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 churn .75, 1 cream pail .38</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 strainer pail .25, 1 water pail .10</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ? .40; 3 basins .10</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 stone jars 1.00, 1 jug .10</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 goblets .25; 1 glass sauce dish .50</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 pie plates .50; 2 platters .20</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pickle dish &amp; 2 bowls</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 sauce dishes</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 water pitcher</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pair steelyards .10; 3 window shades .50</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg beater, grater, funnel, cup &amp; etc.</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ bbl salt; ½ bbl cider</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ bbl vinegar; 2 kegs boiled cider</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 cans fruit</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
House and Farm: Improvements and Production

The choices these households made as consumers were connected to the choices they made as producers. In order to assess these “producer choices” and to explore the interrelations between the consumer and producer choices, I will examine the historic records associated with production and property—the agricultural schedules and tax records.

The 1880 agricultural schedules include data from a number of the farms on the Backbone (Table 5.11). The agricultural schedules must be used carefully; there are caveats. Since the record is only a single point in time while ideas of farm improvement and size and value all were apt to change drastically over several years, the data here may be at an anomalous point in time.

This data is organized by youngest to oldest for the male head of household. In contrast to the patterns in household consumer goods, this table indicates that few attributes related to farm production clearly vary by age. Farm size, percent of improved land, farm value, and value per acre, show no real correlation to age. The only variables that do seem related to age are machine value and machine value per acres tilled, where the two oldest households have the lowest values. Household age does not seem to be a major factor affecting farm production. In Chapter 7, I will revisit these patterns while discussing the role of kinship networks on the Hector Backbone, and I will explore how these networks impacted farm production.
Table 5.11: 1880 agricultural schedule data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Acres total</th>
<th>% Improved</th>
<th>Farm value</th>
<th>Value per acre</th>
<th>Machine value</th>
<th>Machine $/tilled acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Abram Wyatt</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Charles Wickham</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Alexander Dunham</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Estell Kimble</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2100</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>John Bell</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>John Albright</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>2750</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this chapter, I have presented data on households that I have categorized as either young or old. I have discussed numerous facets of the material culture and historic records which paint a picture of how these households consumed, and how this consumption was framed by the household’s age. The bottle assemblages revealed a distinct pattern-old families purchased more bottled medicines than younger families, who generally purchased more alcohol. Looking at the durable consumer goods, such as ceramic vessels, it became clear that younger households prioritized social or formal dining accoutrements. Specialized serving vessels, such as relish bowls and a celery vase, are indicative of this pattern. While this analysis focused on the literal consumption of food, other analyses considered the production and acquisition of food. It is clear that younger households regarded food more as another commodity for purchase, with more tin cans and food bottles. At the same time, it seems clear that they more actively canned, a new practice with a high start-up cost at the time, rather than engage in more traditional
food preservation methods. This trend was visible both in the archaeological record as well as William Dunham’s will and probate records. Farm production was much less influenced by household age as I have categorized it here. While there are some aspects where household age was not a major factor, my analysis of the material culture has shown that age was an important factor influencing consumer behavior.

However, the picture presented here is incomplete—not only is age a much more fluid and complex issue than I have presented it as here, but farm production was intimately tied with family networks. In the next chapter, I will expand my examination of household age to incorporate households which were occupied over a long time. These occupations represent households which underwent the entire lifecycle, from young to old and even generational succession. By incorporating these into my analysis, I will situate age as more than a discreet category for analysis; I will explore the process of aging and its attendant changes archaeologically.
CHAPTER VI

THE MATERIALITY OF GROWING OLD

The previous chapter dealt with the matter of household age as a discrete and bounded category using a gross young/old comparison, but my analysis demonstrated that while this approach is a useful conceptual tool for picking out the differences between these households it is not without limitations. Age, after all, is not a category the same way race or wealth tend to be. Instead, aging is a process all individuals and households go through. There are a number of sites on the Hector Backbone that I will examine to see how the process of aging shaped consumer choice over time. The households discussed in the previous chapters, particularly the Albrights and Wyatts, are not connected with major changes in household age. The Albrights were already an older household when they moved to the Albright II Site, while the Wyatts moved off of the Gardner farm before they reached old age. I will contrast these two sites with sites occupied over a longer time period, sometimes over multiple generations. By doing this, I hope to examine not simply how age as a discrete and bounded category influenced consumption, but how the process of aging informs a household's behavior. All of these sites represent occupations by a single household or family over a longer period of time.

In this chapter, I will build on the discussions in the previous chapters. The households I compared in the previous chapter were chosen because they were easy to classify as either young or old. In this chapter, I will compare these alongside a selection of households chosen because they represent occupations too long to categorize simply as
young or old. Some of the distinctions between these are arbitrary, and this is ultimately
unavoidable. The entire distinction is, by its very nature, arbitrary. The comparisons in
this chapter are meant to highlight how households changed their consumptive and
productive strategies as they aged over a lengthy occupation.

The Material Culture of Generations

The households added for this comparison (Table 6.1) are the Mattisons, Wickhams, and Brodericks. As these sites were occupied over a much longer period of time than the sites examined in the previous chapter, we might expect the assemblages to be larger. However, this is clearly not the case, and when the assemblages are standardized by vessels per occupation several interesting patterns emerge. First, the sites occupied for longer times had, on average, lower rates overall and especially for ceramic vessels (tea and tableware, food service, and food preparation vessels types). The bottle deposition rates, in contrast, are relatively constant among these sites, with the marked exception of the Creighton household. At ten bottles per year, this site produced a remarkably high concentration of bottles, as was discussed in the previous chapter.

Rotman (2005) and Wheeler (1996, 2001) discuss the role of age and lifecycle in forming archaeological assemblages. They both stress the importance of major life events as catalysts for depositional episodes. It would seem as if the data from these farms supports this conclusion. The households analyzed in the previous chapter were generally occupied over a shorter period of time and yielded much higher rates of
deposition. The Broderick, Wickham, and Mattison households were occupied over a much longer period. Surprisingly, they had smaller vessel per year rates. This pattern, which has been evident throughout previous analyses as well, suggests that the major events of starting the household dominated the archaeological assemblages from the Creighton and Owen households. When the site was occupied for a long period, however, the rates of deposition decreased, suggesting these isolated events were balanced by periods of less deposition.

Table 6.1: Households analyzed by lengthy occupations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household</th>
<th>Vessels</th>
<th>Length of Occupation</th>
<th>Vessels per year</th>
<th>Bottles per year</th>
<th>Durables per year</th>
<th>Canning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creighton</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunham</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albright</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broderick</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velie</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattison</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wickham</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the previous chapter’s analysis, the bottle assemblages showed clear trends of alcohol for younger households and medicine for older households. When the households are compared by length of occupation, there is a noticeable lack of any clear patterns in the bottle assemblages (Table 6.2). The Broderick household resembled the younger Wyatt household, which is not surprising since the difference in occupation length is
merely six years. In this sample, the Mattisons had the most interesting pattern, with no alcohol bottles and a higher rate of food bottles. The total absence of alcohol bottles suggests a deliberate consumer choice, however it must be acknowledged that the sample size is very small, particularly for such a long occupation. This point too, is not without significance, suggesting bottles were not regularly purchased by this household. The lack of any strong patterning underscores the importance of age, since it seems clear that age is a more important factor in these consumer choices than length of occupation.

Table 6.2: Percentage of bottle types at six of the sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Creighton</th>
<th>Albright</th>
<th>Wyatt</th>
<th>Broderick</th>
<th>Mattison</th>
<th>Wickham</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length of Occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverage</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicinal</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified bottles (n)</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The durable ceramic and glassware yielded a pattern very similar to the trends explicated in the previous chapter. In virtually all of the assemblages, tea and tablewares, including table glass, accounted for roughly 60-70% of the material (Table 6.3). As these types of vessels were not only generally purchased in the largest quantity, but also handled the most frequently, this pattern is hardly surprising. The previous chapter showed that the percentage of type was not sensitive to household age, and this seems to hold true when examined by length of occupation as well. The percentage of service vessels seems to still be the most interesting data, as it increases with length of occupation.
occupation. These vessels were typically purchased in smaller quantities and handled by fewer people than tea and table wares. We would therefore expect to see the steady accumulation of this type over time.

The large quantities of tea and table wares allow for a more detailed comparison between sites. The diversity in both material and decoration for these ubiquitous items show an interesting pattern. Figure 6.1 illustrates the patterns of decoration and materials of the tea and table wares for all of these sites. The households with more diverse assemblages are represented on the graph by more categories, whereas households represented by fewer categories are less diverse. This display does not account for all measures of diversity, but does provide a useful tool for a gross analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.3: Durable consumer goods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea/Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table glass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear from this chart that the Wyatt assemblage has the most variation in decoration and material. The Mattisons, Velies, and Brodericks are also all relatively diverse. On the other hand, the Owens are the least diverse, and the Albrights, Dunhams, and Wickhams are also not diverse. These patterns do not correlate directly either with age or length of occupation. Like the previous analysis of vessel types, tea and table ware
diversity is not sensitive to either age or length of occupation. Instead, there seems to be a connection between this material and the presence of related households in the area. The most diverse assemblages are from households with less family in the area. The Mattisons, for example, were the last household of the extended Lee family. On the other hand, the less diverse assemblages are associated with households like the Albrights, Wickhams, and Dunhams. Of the farms investigated as part of the FLNF Farmstead Archaeology Project, the Dunham family controlled at least four. The importance of family networks will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

A Time to Reap and a Time to Sow: Agricultural Production Through the Lifecycle

I have previously examined farm production and improvement with a focus on a single point in time. These comparisons have elucidated how age and lifecycle impacted household behaviors in the spheres of consumption and production. It was clear that while age played a role in the consumption of durable consumer goods and other purchased items, it was much less relevant to production. The only strong correlation was between machinery values and age. However, looking at production in this way masks the choices that occur over time. Farms did not simply stick with one strategy, but modified their behaviors in response to different conditions in the larger marketplace as well as varying resources available for investment. Production was prioritized vis-a-vis consumption in an ongoing and dynamic process.
There are several tools I will use to explore this process. The agricultural schedules from 1850-1880, and the tax records for later years, offer a unique look into the actual production and values of these farms. These records provide a good picture of particular events, but are not all-encompassing, nor does each year furnish the same level of detail. The physical remains of the farms, as recorded as archaeological features, suggests different relations and priorities for different farms as well. The information
from these sources will be compared to archaeological evidence of both consumer goods as well as archaeological evidence for production. In the previous chapter, the analysis focused on the year 1880. In this chapter, I will bring in additional years to show how the priorities and emphasis changed over time. I will begin with a detailed examination of several individual farms before moving to more general comparisons across multiple farms.

Over the course of a lifetime of occupation, we would expect a farmer to begin with an initial investment in a property, evident from increases in farm size, higher percentages of improved acres, and greater value per acre. As a household aged, we would expect either the farm to steadily decrease in size, value, or levels of improvement or to be transferred or operated by the next generation. Data from Alexander Dunham’s farm when he was aged from 33 to 73, show these steady trends (Figure 6.2). The first ten years are marked by a decrease in total farm size, with associated rises in percent improved and value per acre. The farm size in fact decreases steadily throughout most of the A. Dunham occupation, levelling out at 80 acres in 1900. Along with the decrease in size, there is an associated decrease in value per acre. The percent improved was not available for years after 1880.

In 1880 the Alexander Dunham farm (later occupied by George and Gladys Creighton) had an above average investment in machinery at $330, which is more than triple their machinery value just five years before. This investment suggests that Alexander Dunham was deliberately investing in the productive capacity of his farm by intensifying his agricultural practices. In 1880 Alexander Dunham also reported the use
of 30 weeks of hired labor. The decrease in farm size from 1875 to 1880 combined with
the increase in machinery and hired labor all indicate an intensification in farm
production activities. In addition, the presence of a drilled well at the farm suggests an
additional level of investment in the early 20th century. The well is located midway
between the house and barn, and likely served both domestic and agricultural functions.

Figure 6.2: 1875-1920 A. Dunham farm statistics

John Bell's property reveals a similar decrease as he aged (Figure 6.3). Improvements in the first ten years represented here result in a sharp increase in the value per acre. However, a large land purchase caused a drop in percent improved as well as the value per acre. The total farm value mirrors this trend, with an increase from 1860 to 1870, followed by a steady decline. The percent of the property that was improved
dropped from roughly 90% in 1860 to just over a third in 1880, with value per acre dropping in half as well.

Figure 6.3: John Bell farm statistics

The households of Sylvester Dunham and Erastus Wickham also exhibit marked decreases in the value per acre. However, the trend is not as well defined for these two farms, a fact that may be explained by their relationship to other nearby farms. Unlike the Albrights and Bells, the Dunham and Wickham farms were more connected in production to other farms and households. The Sylvester Dunham farm neighbored the Dunham I farm, which was purchased by Sylvester for his son William in 1880. The Wickham farm
shifted over time to being operated by Erastus's son, Charles Wickham. Erastus Wickham established this farm in 1837. After retiring in circa 1873, he moved to nearby Bennettsburg. Diaries and day books of Erastus, Charles, and William Wickham, along with Charles’ son-in-law James Hubbard, indicate that productive aspects of this family included the farm on the Hector Backbone as well as land in Bennettsburg. While there was some fluctuations in the value of these farms, they were more actively maintained for succeeding generations. In contrast, the Albright’s farm value rose consistently through the occupation of John and Catherine Albright. After their deaths no one took over the farm operations. By the time Herman and Maude Broderick took control of the farm, the value on the 95 acres was down to $600 (Table 6.4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1875</th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Albright</td>
<td>$1,800</td>
<td>$2,750</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herman Broderick</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Wickham and Albright farms also allow for interesting comparisons to the material culture assemblages. The Wickham household is represented by a single assemblage over the entire occupation, while the Albright farm is represented by two separate households, the Albrights and Brodericks, both of whom are also visible in the historic records. The Wickham family kept a consistent farm size over several decades. While the absolute acreage did change several times, the improved acreage stayed around 80-90%. The impact of the change from Erastus to Charles as head-of-household seems
to have had little if any impact. Overall, the Wickham material was not diverse (Table 6.5). The consumer durables were predominantly white-bodied earthenware, and roughly half of these were undecorated (n=52). Despite the long occupation, we see very little evidence of socially oriented consumption visible at other sites, with very few decorative buttons (n=5) or toys (n=4). The only major exception to this pattern is a porcelain oyster plate, a highly specialized serving vessel. The household transitions evident from the Wickham family history were not accompanied by the dramatic material changes that have been documented by others (Henry 1987; Wheeler 1996, 2001; Rotman 2005).

Table 6.5: Consumer durables from Wickham household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White-bodied earthenware</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redware</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellowware</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoneware</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porcelain</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Albright farm was similarly operated between several generations, but the specifics reveal interesting patterns in the associated behaviors. The farm was originally purchased and operated by John and Catherine Albright, who lived in a log cabin (Albright II Site) until their deaths in 1886 and 1888 respectively. The farm was inherited by their son Isaac, who owned and operated the R. Henry farm down the road. Isaac likely operated both farms, but did not maintain the buildings on the Albright farm. In 1897, Herman and Maude Broderick moved to the Albright farm and built a new house. Herman paid taxes on this property, making it clear that it was his. Between 1900 and
1920 the farm value did not improve, however, and remained depressed from the value in
1880, before the death of John Albright. Failure to pay taxes in the 1920s led to the farm
being sold at auction. The new owner, Chester Burnett, apparently allowed the
Brodericks to continue living at the farm. It is clear that no one other than the Brodericks
lived at this location in the 20th century. It is also clear, both from the historic records and
corroborated by the archaeological evidence, that the Brodericks were not well-off
financially. However, the Albright farm is one of the few in the area with a drilled well,
an expensive improvement that could only have been put in during the Broderick
occupation. Archaeologically, the Broderick household is marked by its paucity. Despite
the over-30 year occupation, the site yielded very few ceramic vessels, even fewer than
the Albrights. Like the Albrights, the Broderick household is notable for the paucity of
ceramic vessel forms, having a total of 12 different forms represented as compared to the
13 forms from the Albrights. However, the Brodericks have more evidence for
specialized forms and elaborate materials than the Albrights, most notably a celery vase.

The Lee farm also exhibits major changes in the farm landscape based in
household succession. Established in 1819, the Lee farm was one of the earliest farms on
the Backbone. Daniel Lee operated the farm until 1844, when he was divorced from his
wife. After the divorce, it was Daniel who left the farm and lived with his parents in the
nearby town of Ulysses. The Lee farm was apparently abandoned temporarily, but by
1865 Daniel’s nephew, Jeptha, was operating it although it was still owned by Daniel. By
the late 1860s Daniel had returned to the Lee farm, and was operating it. The household
included Daniel’s daughter Diana, her husband William Mattison (45), a farm laborer,
and their six children: Ella (21), Bell (19), Frank (17), Willie (15), Lewis (13), and Emma (8). The Mattisons did not stay with Daniel long, but after Williams death in 1872 Diana moved back to the Lee farm, and she was listed as the head of household in 1875. Daniel Lee died in 1878, and his estate would not be settled for some time. Diana Mattison’s children all sold their interest in the farm to their brother Lewis Mattison in 1882. By 1890, all of his siblings and his mother had either died, moved away, or been committed to an asylum for lunacy, leaving Lewis Mattison as the sole heir to the Lee farm and last remaining family member.

It appears that Lewis Mattison built a new house on the other side of the road at the time of his marriage to Amanda around 1895. This shift in the landscape of the household contrasts wildly to the shift seen on the Albright farm. The Lee I house burned down between 1879 and 1937, although it is not clear that this is the reason it was abandoned. The most interesting aspect is that Lewis Mattison’s house lacked an associated well, cistern, privy, or barn. The only identified outbuildings at the new house were a garage and possibly a hen house. It seems likely that Lewis utilized the still-extant features of the older Lee house while abandoning the house itself. Even if the house did burn, it does not explain why Lewis rebuilt in a new location. The most likely explanation for this shift is that he wished to separate himself socially from his family’s checkered past. He accomplished this by separating himself physically from that past.
A gross comparison of the durable consumer goods from the sites suggests he also separated himself from the material culture of his past. The durables from the Lee I Site have a mean date of 1869, whereas the same material from the Lee II Site has a mean date of 1903. The Lee I Site had a TPQ of 1896, which supports the idea that the site was accessed during the Lewis Mattison occupation. The Lee II Site had a TPQ of 1936. Based on my previous analyses, the tight dates are indicative of a young household. Given this context, along with the fact that Lewis had lived at this farm his whole life, it also suggests that Lewis Mattison separated himself from his past with new household equipment.

The analysis of these individual farms has pointed to differences in how major household transitions were expressed both on the landscape and in the material culture. The succession period at the Wickham household is marked by more continuity than either the Albrights or Lees. The original Albright house was a log cabin, and it is not surprising that a new household would build a permanent dwelling. It is surprising that they invested as heavily as they did in this dwelling despite their obvious financial uncertainty. Lewis Mattison, in contrast, may have built a new house for pragmatic reasons, but symbolic reasons clearly played a role. While these household changes are naturally tied to issues of age, aging, and lifecycle, it seems clear that there is much more at work. The variation in how this succession occurs suggests the family ties impact the extent of these changes during succession.
The 1875 agricultural schedule also includes building value, which can be compared with features recorded during archaeological survey. The 1875 building values at the Albright and Bell farms are similar. While there were numerous features, additions, and improvements to the Bell property, the comparable values, and also the presence of a drilled well, make it likely that these were largely undertaken by the Palmer occupation, after John Bell's death. The most intriguing pattern in these values is the Kimball farm. Archaeologically, nine features were recorded at the Kimball farm, including a house, kitchen addition, a well, a privy, and a barn complex. Given the high building value at this time, it seems clear that their domestic context was improved prior to establishing a successful farming operation. This interpretation is supported by the agricultural schedule data. From 1865 to 1875 the farm value increased from $900 to $1800, but the total acreage and improved acreage both decreased. In 1875, the farm’s $900 building value is surprisingly high when compared to the wider sample (Table 6.6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm</th>
<th>Building Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Albright</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Bell</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylvester Dunham</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Dunham</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuben Dusenbury</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estell Kimble</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erastus Wickham</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Wickham</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chapter has explored the changes individual houses underwent over several decades of occupation. When the 1880 agricultural schedule is analyzed with length of
occupation in mind, trends similar to those observed in the previous chapter emerge (Table 6.7). There is no strong correlation between how long any of these farms had been operated as of 1880 and the major indicators of farm production. The most interesting pattern is the different values of the Wickham and Mattison farms. As previously noted, the household succession at the Wickham household was much smoother than that at the Mattison household. These transitions seem to be reflected in the agricultural schedules, with the Wickham farm valued much more highly than the other farms, while the Mattison farm, which had been occupied for a similar length of time, was valued less than the Wickham farm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of occupation as of 1880</th>
<th>Farm</th>
<th>Farm value</th>
<th>% Improved</th>
<th>Value/acre</th>
<th>Improved acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Alexander Dunham</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>William Dunham</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Sylvester Dunham</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>John Albright</td>
<td>2750</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Charles Wickham</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Lewis Mattison</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this chapter, I have attempted to explore how household age is not simply a discreet, bounded concept, but is rather a complex process. A single household often transitioned through this process at a single site, making an analysis of age based on essential categories simplistic. By comparing the material culture assemblages of
households organized around their occupation length, I have drawn out the impact the
process of aging has on our interpretations. Short occupations seem marked by dramatic
events, such as establishing the household. This pattern is visible in the mean vessel
dates for the durable consumer goods at the Owen and Wyatt households. However,
when the occupation gets longer, these patterns are masked by the accumulation of
everyday activities. Nevertheless, the lack of any well-defined patterns that correlate with
length of occupation reinforces the importance of age as a factor influencing
consumption.

A closer examination of the agricultural production and material culture at
individual sites allowed for a comparison to the specifics of the household’s lifecycle.
General patterns of expansion and increased value followed by steady decreases were seen,
but were not the only patterns visible. Households with strong family ties and smooth
periods of household succession, most notably the Wickhams, did not experience an
associated drop in value but rather maintained steady increases. In contrast, the Mattison
household, through the many difficult household transitions with the Lee family, did not
experience this expansion.

Looking at the agricultural records highlighted the ways in which these farms
changed over time. While these comparisons are not without their difficulties, they have
highlighted the way different farms changed over time. In Chapter 5, by discussing age as
an absolute and essential category, it was put forth as an explanatory mechanism in its
own right. This chapter has turned that approach on its head, and situated age as a process which shapes and provides context for other factors. Clearly, consumption is not as simple a process as “old people bought this and young people bought that”. Numerous factors intersect, and age is both a process which shapes consumer choices as well as a categorization for the choices.

In the following chapter, I will consider all the sites and preceding analyses under a new lens. I will shift the focus from household age to the connections between these different households, in the form of family relations, or kinship, as well as the interdependence of consumer choice with how these farms made “producer choices”.
CHAPTER VII

FAMILY “VALUES”: CONSUMPTION AND KINSHIP

I began my analysis by controlling for age and picking out major differences between three sites. The Wyatt, Owen, and Albright occupations all represent drastically different households. Archaeological investigations into these three farms yielded different patterns in the assemblages as well. My discussion was situated in a comparison of these three farms to frame a more complex and nuanced exploration of consumer behavior.

I have chosen to examine how consumer decisions were made in the context of household age and lifecycle. I have attempted to examine age both as a discreet and bounded category and as a process. In Chapter 5, I compared five farms that were categorized as either older or younger households to reveal how age as a defining characteristic influenced behavior. In Chapter 6, I looked at farms occupied over much longer stretches of time to show how the gradual process of aging influenced consumption patterns as seen in the archaeological record. This process of aging is conceptually different from what is typically meant by the term lifecycle, which is analyzed in reference to major life events as transitions between different life stages.

My analysis thus far has sought to examine consumer behavior on several farms on the Hector Backbone. To do so, I have considered the archaeological record and the consumer goods therein. The different patterns in bottles, ceramics, and other purchased goods, have given insight into how the different farms behaved. However, since
consumption can be broadly defined as the use of resources to attain desired goals, consumer behavior must be extended to mean more than bottles and plates. I have incorporated several additional measures of consumption. The improvements to the house and farm, as well as productive priorities in general, all give insight into how the allocation of household resources was prioritized, which is inextricably linked to what is traditionally meant by consumer goods.

Finally, there is one other key idea that has surfaced many times during my analysis, and which is related to age and lifecycle as well as production and consumption. While the households on the Hector Backbone have been treated as isolated and discreet units for analysis, that is not the whole picture. Many of the households had relatives in the area, while some had none. Some, most notably the Dunhams and the Wickhams, established major familial dynasties that encompassed numerous farms and households over generations. Some, such as the Lees, dwindled over time to be no more than a single household. Others, such as the Wyatts, were short-term residents of the Backbone with no strong ties to the area.

My final discussion will focus on bringing these issues all together. I will begin by reintroducing the farms and households I will discuss with a particular emphasis on if and how they are tied to other farms on the Backbone. I will then reassess the patterns observed in consumer behavior under the lens of kinship.
As I have mentioned, the Wickhams and Dunhams represent two major familial dynasties on the Hector Backbone. Through marriage and descent, many of the households in the area were related to one of these families. These families controlled numerous farms in the area directly and even more when marriage ties are considered. Those that were not directly tied to these families were either part of smaller lineages, such as the Albrights or Creightons, or isolated farm families without family in the immediate area, such as Wyatts, although his wife Kate’s father lived nearby and helped support them, at least to the extent that he paid off their mortgage. Certainly every household had relatives. My major distinction in this chapter is between large, extended families and those without such extended families in the area. This distinction will allow me to explore the general patterns of difference between the two categories.

I will tie all these farms and analyses from previous chapters together again by reassessing the patterns under the lens of kinship. Looking at the consumer goods present at these sites as an expression of kin and non-kin relations reveals some interesting patterns. My discussion will refer to patterns presented in previous chapters as well as draw on new data and analysis to explore the complexities of this topic more fully.

In Chapter 5, I presented data on the mean dates for durable consumer goods and bottles (Figure 5.1). The young Owen and Wyatt households both yielded dates near the beginning of their occupation, while the old households of the Albrights and Velies had
durable consumer goods which predated their occupation, a pattern likely related to the fact that they were already older when they established these households. The Dunham and Creighton households also had durable consumer goods which predated their occupations, and I suggested in Chapter 5 that this had more to do with their family ties than their age. Like the Wickham household, the farm occupied by Minor Dunham passed through several generations of Dunhams in relatively smooth succession. The first Dunham to live at the farm was William. After William died it was operated by his brother Monroe, who gave it to his son when he took over the Sylvester Dunham farm. The mean date (1892) and TPQ (1902) for the durables would suggest they date to the beginning of Monroe’s occupation, suggesting Minor’s father left him not only the farm, but the household goods as well.

The Creightons have a similar pattern, with a durable mean date (1900) significantly earlier than the occupation while the TPQ (1929) is near the beginning. However, only two vessels have a TPQ later than 1900, most are significantly earlier, suggesting most of the vessels were acquired near the same time, circa 1900 (Table 7.1). Since George was 8 years old in 1900, he must have inherited a large quantity of older durable consumer goods or purchased older sets in lieu of newer goods. These older vessels would seem to contradict the pattern of conspicuously higher consumption from the Creighton household observed in Chapter 5.

The Creighton household exhibited similar patterns when the diversity of the tea and table wares was examined in Chapter 6 (Figure 6.1). The assemblage from the
Creighton household consisted of almost exclusively white-bodied earthenware, both undecorated and decorated. The decoration was predominantly decal, with dates that ranged from late 19th century until the end of their occupation. These vessels may have been purchased later in the occupation as a replacement for the older vessels, perhaps as the Creightons’ fortunes improved.

Table 7.1: Creighton household vessel dates for durable consumer goods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Mean date</th>
<th>TPQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Prep/Storage</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>1885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea/Tableware</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilet</td>
<td>1870</td>
<td>1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table glass</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>1900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As I discussed in Chapter 6, the most diverse assemblages were associated with the Wyatts, Mattisons, Brodericks, and Velies. These are the families that, as I discussed previously, had fewer family connections in the immediate area. This fact may suggest that these households invested in material culture to facilitate social interaction and forge new social ties. The high rate of service vessels from the Wyatt, Velie, Broderick, and Creighton households, the details of which were discussed in Chapter 5, corroborates this interpretation. In contrast, the less diverse assemblages came from households such as the Wickhams, Dunhams, and Owens. The Wickham and Dunham households were extended across numerous households in the area and succession between generations was generally a smoother affair than at other farms. That is not to suggest that these
families lacked specialized vessels or that they did not participate in the larger social world. A highly specialized oyster plate (Figure 7.1) corroborates Charles Wickham’s day books, which suggest he purchased oysters frequently. Despite this, the larger patterns all suggest that the family networks formed a basis for social interaction among these households. Since households such as the Wyatts and Brodericks lacked these inherited social networks, they forged social networks by hosting their neighbors in more formal settings, a behavior evidenced by the food service vessels.

![Figure 7.1: Oyster plate from the Wickham household](image)

A Time to Buy and a Time to Build: Prioritizing Consumption and Production

Finally, I would like to look directly at the ways in which these households were incorporated into the larger economy as farms, and how the choices of household consumption and farm production interacted (Beaudry 2002; Hautaniemi and Rotman 2002).
To do this, I will focus on two main lines of evidence. First, I will consider the improvements made to a house and farm, such as additions, expanded barns, and drilled wells and the use of concrete (Friedlander 1991). I will also look at the agricultural schedules and tax records to see how the farm value and production varied. I have classified improvements as either to the house or to the farm. Examples of house improvements are additions, retaining walls and other landscaping features, and garages. Farm improvements were selected because they were associated with the farm as a productive unit; examples include barn complexes and additions, agricultural outbuildings, and any feature that could be linked to farm production as opposed to domestic uses. Building values were listed in the 1875 agricultural schedule. These give another way to examine how much property investment and improvement was undertaken, particularly when compared to overall farm value.

In Chapter 5, I argued that farm production activities were not impacted by household age so much as family ties with other farms in the area. When this data is arranged by family networks (Table 7.2) these patterns become clearer. Some measures of productivity are surprisingly consistent, such as the percent of land improved and the value per acre. In general, however, the farms belonging to the Wickham or Dunham families have more improved acres overall. The farm values are also higher for the Wickham and Dunham farms than the other farms. This pattern suggests that the households worked together to maximize the value of all the farms belonging to the extended family.
Lewis Mattison has an improved acreage more similar to the Wickhams and Dunhams. This fact is not surprising; the Lee family was, earlier in the 19th century, a much more influential family on the Backbone. Even though the family size had declined, the improved acreage of the farm had not. Some insight into his operations can be gained from Charles Wickham’s diaries. Charles Wickham recorded that Lewis Mattison let the Wickhams harvest wood from his farm for shares and let the Wickhams pasture sheep for 2 cents per head per week. Lewis Mattison clearly had difficulty operating a farm this size on his own, and found ways to use the land that required less labor from him.

In addition to having more improved land, the Wickhams and Dunhams utilized more labor. It is telling that all of the reported labor costs come from these families (in addition to Lewis Mattison). While there is strong indication that the farms were working together to some extent, they clearly employed labor as well, a behavior likely related to the larger acreages that were farmed. It is not possible to determine who this labor is, and it cannot be ruled out that they are paying family members for their assistance, perhaps at low rates. While speculative, it may help explain why the other households did not have labor costs. Likewise, these households were the ones with more reported fencing costs, perhaps to help distinguish their farms from the farms outside their family networks. The households without extended family networks apparently invested more in fertilizers,
perhaps in an effort to squeeze more productivity out of the land they could farm. While these are tenuous interpretations, the patterns visible in Table 7.2 are suggestive.

In addition to their reported agricultural production, we can examine the kinship networks between these farms archaeologically, by looking at the presence and absence of improvements (Table 7.3). This analysis is a gross look for general trends between these farms, and does not necessarily account for all possible nuances in these features. However, it seems that households that had more family in the immediate area had more heavily improved properties. The occupations associated with a branch of the Wickham or Dunham families all had improvements to both the house, such as additions, and the farm, such as expanded barn complexes. It is interesting to note that these farms were the same as the ones that exhibited less diversity in their ceramic assemblages, as was discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

There is a general pattern among these related households for mutual support, improvement, and expansion. Another line of evidence which supports this type of investment is the way in which parents purchased property to help establish their children as a new household. This behavior not only helped their children become established, it also helped extend the influence of a family to new farms. The earliest example of this is the Owen household. The property was originally purchased by Mowbry Owen for his son, Daniel. This pattern of paternal investment is common, and speaks to the strong role family ties played in helping households get established on the Backbone. The Dunham I
farm was also originally purchased for this reason, as Sylvester Dunham helped establish his son William. In contrast, the Albright II Site represents a farm an older couple established themselves, leaving their already-established farm to their son. While their children and grandchildren would live on the Backbone (Maude Broderick was the granddaughter of John and Catherine Albright), they would never be as firmly established here.

Table 7.2: 1880 Agricultural schedule data arranged by family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Acres improved</th>
<th>Percent improved</th>
<th>Farm value</th>
<th>Fence cost ($)</th>
<th>Fertilizer ($)</th>
<th>Amount Labor ($)</th>
<th>$/acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Albright</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>2750</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Bell</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuben Dusenbury</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>5280</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estell Kimball</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2100</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis Mattison</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Wickham</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC Wickham</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Dunham</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylvester Dunham</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Dunham</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>160</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Dunham</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3750</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, the Wyatt household also exhibited this type of family-network based connection and raises interesting questions of what Groover (2004) termed simple control, the influence a head of household wields over the other members of the household based on control over resources. Whereas most of the examples were of the
husband’s parents helping to set up the new farm, the Wyatt farm was assisted by the
wife’s family. Kate Wyatt’s father, John Knight, was a wealthy farmer in the area, and
Kate was his only child. After starting the farm circa 1880, the Wyatt’s mortgage on the
property was paid off by John Knight in 1886. Given the large assemblage of household
goods visible in the Wyatt household’s assemblage, it is worth wondering if Kate wielded
more simple control over the household resources.

Table 7.3: Evidence for improvement to houses and farms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm</th>
<th>House</th>
<th>Farm</th>
<th>Drilled</th>
<th>1875 Bldg Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creighton</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunham</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wickham</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC Wickham</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bement</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broderick</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albright</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattison</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dusenberry</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimball</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The farms operated by families with fewer kin connections showed less evidence
for improvement. Looking at the building values reported in the 1875 agricultural
schedules (Table 7.4), it seems as though the households with fewer related households invested more heavily in maintaining a high value for existing buildings, such as houses, the installation of drilled wells, and landscaping. This interpretation is based on several factors. First, the average building value is slightly higher for the less-connected households. Also, when the individual farms are considered it seems as though a smaller number of buildings account for this higher value. The Kimble farm had the highest building value, at $900, which is greater than would be expected given the farm size and value. The Kimble farm was occupied by two people—Estell Kimball and his mother Hannah, and all recorded improvements were to the house and surrounding area, such as a kitchen addition and landscaping features. This tendency to improve the most visible and public areas—such as the house and yard—is intriguing in light of the more diverse assemblages, including more ceramics associated with food service (Blanton 1994). In contrast, the households with more kin connections had building values generally below expectations. The farms of both Charles Wickham and Sylvester Dunham had lower building values than would be expected given the total farm value. However, if we average the building values of Charles Wickham with that of his father Erastus, the value is more in line with expectations, suggesting another way these farms worked together. If we take house expansion and improvement as a type of conspicuous consumption similar to the purchase of elaborated durable consumer goods, it falls in line with the patterns in other types of material culture between these farms.
Looking at farm size through time, households with extended family relations, such as the Albrights and Wickhams, show drastic peaks and valleys in farm size (Figure 7.2). These correlate to periods in which large tracts were purchased, and then transferred to children. In 1860, John and Catherine Albright operated a farm on Lot 91, a good distance from the Backbone. In 1865, they purchased the 95 acre Albright Farm, which accounts for the large jump seen here. The Lot 91 farm was soon transferred to their son, Harrison, which is evidenced here by the decrease in farm size. Similar processes explain the spikes for both the Wickhams and Dunhams. In contrast, households such as the Dusenburys and Kimbles show much more steady values, with either gradual increases or decreases.

Table 7.4: 1875 farm value vs. building value

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm</th>
<th>Farm value</th>
<th>Bldg Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Albright</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Bement</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Bell</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuben Dusenbury</td>
<td>4500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estell Kimball</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylvester Dunham</td>
<td>3640</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Dunham</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Dunham</td>
<td>3100</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erastus Wickham</td>
<td>3500</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Wickham</td>
<td>4360</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We gain further insight into kin networks by examining machinery values. Machinery represents a deliberate investment in the productive capacity of the farm, and it was noted in Chapter 5 that it does seem to be impacted by household age. There is,
however, an additional connection to kin networks that becomes evident. When plotted against the total farm value, deviations from the general trend suggest either deliberately high or abnormally low investment in this productive capacity (Figure 7.3). Using data from the 1880 agricultural schedules, Figure 7.3 highlights the farms in my sample against the trend from 100 farms in the wider area. Most of the farms in my sample fall within expected ranges. The Wyatt, Kimball, Mattison, and Wickham farms all have machinery-to-farm value ratios fitting with the general trend. What is interesting are the exceptions. Both the Alexander and Sylvester Dunham farms fall significantly above expectations. In contrast, the William Dunham and Reuben Dusenberry farms fall well below the average machinery value for their farm values.

It is telling that three of these four outliers are Dunhams, one of the most prolific dynasties on the Backbone. The fourth farm was that of Reuben Dusenberry. From the census and agricultural records, it appears as though Reuben only moved to the farm circa 1879 at the age of 64, and died five years later. Prior to this, while Reuben owned the farm, it appears that Mitchell Gardner was operating it. The lower machinery value may relate to aspects of farm tenancy rather than family and lifecycle issues (Conklin 2011).

It is clear that the Sylvester and William Dunham farms were connected. As I have pointed out previously, Sylvester Dunham was William’s father, and purchased William’s farm for him. It seems likely, given this, that the neighboring farms shared machinery. Sylvester’s high value is thus based on the need for extra machinery for
William to use. If the two values are averaged, the resulting value would be in line with expectations.

Figure 7.2: Farm value through time

Alexander Dunham’s farm experienced a steady decrease in size over his occupation. In the previous chapter, the changes were discussed as they related to the process of aging. Figure 7.3 offers additional insight into these patterns and leads to some interesting interpretations. First, his investment in machinery is concurrent with his decreasing farm size. This trend suggests that his priority was not a large farm, but an efficient farm. This behavior was possibly related to overall costs of labor. Alexander
and Olive Dunham only had one son, Irvin. Irvin did not live on the farm after his parents’ death, however. In fact, he established himself as a sawyer well before they died, which would lead us to believe that he was not helping his parents with farm operations. This belief is corroborated by Alexander Dunham’s labor costs; 30 weeks and $160.

While not abnormally high for the farms with labor costs, most of the farms in the district did not have any reported labor costs (124 of 201). It should be noted that reported labor costs likely does not include families helping each other as well as other categories, such as laborers paid with room and board. However, even with these considerations, the presence of labor costs at the A. Dunham farm is striking considering the large extended family Alexander was a part of. His labor and machine costs, along with his decreasing farm size, suggest that he was perhaps struggling to keep his farm fully operational.

There are surprising patterns in how these farms participated in consumer culture. An obvious expectation would be that wealthier, higher valued farms would exhibit more consumption. However, my data shows almost the opposite. The most highly valued farms had, for the length of their occupations, surprisingly low vessel deposition rates. The more moderately valued farms, represented here by the Wyatts, showed more vessel deposition. Unfortunately, both the occupations of the Owens and the Creightons fell outside of years available for the agricultural and tax records. However, the Kimble farm is similar in many respects—a smaller, moderately valued farm, whose owner, Estell Kimble, did not have significant family ties in the area. This farm was investigated in the
summer of 2012, and while the data was not available for analysis, impressions suggest that the site yielded an immense amount of material, fitting with this pattern. While the Wickham family was wealthy, the Brodericks were clearly not. Not only was the farm value significantly lower, but they were even foreclosed on and lost the farm around 1920. This suggests, unsurprisingly, that while moderately-valued farms participated more heavily in consumer culture, the poorer a farm became, the less active this participation became.

Figure 7.3: 1880 machine value vs. farm value
In this chapter, I have examined how extended kinship networks on the Hector Backbone influenced the ways these households behaved vis a vis consumer culture. I have revisited data presented in previous chapters and incorporated new data to show that these family networks influenced social behavior and productive choices and priorities as they related to consumer behavior. These kinship networks were inextricably linked to the age and lifecycle of these households. As a household aged, the children established new households. This process was often facilitated by parental investment. Additionally, related households formed a basis for both social interaction and cooperative production that households without extended family networks lacked. To compensate for this lack, these households invested in consumer culture as a way to help forge new social networks and had smaller farms. These patterns were visible in the material culture as well as the agricultural schedules.
CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

The literature on consumer choice has typically regarded consumption as a primary way in which individuals and households crafted their identities vis a vis society-at-large. This framework has both its advantages as well as its limitations. I utilized this approach to consumer choice as it applies to household age. I suggested that age is one other way in which households varied in their consumption. While this may not be the most earth-shattering revelation, it has often been underutilized as an explanatory device for historical archaeology. By using specific sites to approach the importance of age and consumption, I have aimed to expand the academic discourse on this topic. While there are many other research avenues which could expand my discussion, my analysis has focused on broad patterns and general trends.

Using data from the FLNF Farmstead Archaeology Project, I have sought to explore some of the complexities in consumer choice. In Chapter 2, I provided a background on the issue of consumer choice as a topic of general scholarly interest, within the context of anthropology, and as an archaeological tool. Approaches to consumption within anthropology do not constrain themselves to a model based on a rational actor. Archaeological studies, however, have tended to focus on economic aspects of consumption, basing our interpretations on the monetary value of the goods,
typically ceramics, and from there discussing the goods as a rational choice or in terms of conspicuous consumption. In addition to extending my analysis of consumption to a wider array of goods, I have used age and kinship as framing devices for understanding consumption. Others have argued that age can be understood as a simple transition; as households acquired more resources, they purchased more goods (Wheeler 1996, 2001; Groover 2004; Rotman 2005). My analysis has demonstrated that the reality of age is more complex than this, with younger households often (although not universally) participating more in consumer culture. The measures of consumption I have employed in my analysis did not correlate with length of occupation either; the material assemblages were not simply aggregates with longer occupations consuming more based on the length of occupation.

The farmers on the Hector Backbone did make rational choices with their capital, however these choices were not always rational in the strictest economic sense. Some households, such as the Brodericks, were limited by their economic means in what they could purchase, and this seems to be reflected in the paucity of the associated material culture. However, despite this economic limitation they had a well drilled, an expensive proposition at any time. The Kimball Farm likewise improved the buildings to the point where they had one of the highest building values in the area, particularly for a small, 25 acre farm. The Creightons also seemed to have had some financial limitations, but they had a diverse assemblage of ceramics and large quantities of canned and prepacked foods.
By incorporating production into my analysis of consumption I have shown that participation in the social world was just as important to these households as economic expansion and farm productivity. Neither was consumption simply an expression of individual or household agency against the larger society. As productive farms, these households retained a measure of balance between what they could do, what they wanted to do, and what they had to do to remain both economically viable and socially relevant.

I have approached consumer choice via three main avenues. In Chapters 5 and 6, I explored the ways in which choices in consumption were influenced by household age and lifecycle. I dealt with age as both a essential category, in which a household was either “old” or “young”. Through a careful selection of sites, I was able to explore this division in a meaningful way. However, in Chapter 6 I broadened the scope so that age was no longer a simple categorization but a complex process every household underwent, shifting from young to old over years, and sometimes with generational shifts altering this process even more. In Chapter 7, I looked at how these choices were framed by kinship between different households. I further explored how the issue of consumer choice was linked to the ways these farms prioritized their decisions between production and consumption.

It is clear from my discussion that age is a complex issue that cannot be adequately represented or interpreted by simplistic analytical tools. The classification I employed in Chapter 5 does help elucidate issues of age and their importance. Notable
patterns between these different households were clear. Younger households invested more in socially oriented forms of consumption, such as formal dining and food service. In addition, young households were more apt to purchase food as a commodity in tin cans and bottles. However, these analyses relied upon convenient data structured in such a way as to make these essential age-based categories meaningful. Household age is a salient factor in analyzing consumer behaviors. Treating age as a discreet category is a useful hermeneutic device. Households that were drastically different ages engaged differently with various aspects of consumer culture. These differences include simple interpretations such as older households’ preference for medicine. However, a consideration of age has also led to more nuanced discussions of broader behavioral patterns. Different preferences for canning jars and prepackaged food between young and old households are not simple choices, but indicate drastically different methods of food production and preparation. These differences speak to how successive generations of households were increasingly incorporated into the burgeoning consumer culture, and more readily purchased items as commodities while previous generations acquired these same items through other means.

In sites with more complex histories, these categories blur. Chapter 6 explored the ways in which aging, as a process rather than a bounded category, impacted household consumption over long periods of time. While direct statements can be made regarding age, such as younger households were more active in consumer culture and old households purchased more medicines, these do not paint the whole picture of how age
impacts consumer choice. Certain patterns were obvious in short occupations by either young or old households. In contrast, households that gradually aged, transitioning from young to old over decades, did not reveal these same patterns. Evidence of unusual or rare events were masked by the accumulation of the mundane. As time progressed, many farms experienced generational changes in who controlled the property. While this transition at the Wickham farm appeared relatively smooth, the Albright and Lee farms are marked by more drastic alterations. While a useful hermeneutic device, no household is permanently young or old. Instead, age is lived as a process by individuals and households even while they undergo major lifecycle changes. The process of aging and the associated lifecycle changes alter what a household needs as well as how they can acquire it. I explored the material culture of households that transitioned over an entire lifetime, or even multiple generations. These households exhibited less marked patterns than households occupied over shorter periods; dramatic changes that were marked in the latter households were masked in the former. These transitions were even more visible in the records of agricultural production. My analysis made it clear that production and consumption must both be considered in tandem to account for how a household behaves; dividing the choices a household makes in spending its resources from the choices it makes in how those resources are acquired obfuscates the inherent connection between these processes.

Likewise, kinship has often gone underappreciated in the archaeological literature. While there certainly are exceptions (Cabak and Inkrot 1997; Lewis 2003), by revisiting
my interpretations under this lens in Chapter 7, I have sought to expand the discussion on
the subject, and to offer tools for the incorporation of kinship and inter-site family
relations into larger archaeological discussions. Familial connections played a large role
in the settlement of the Hector Backbone. Families like the Dunhams and Wickhams
controlled large tracts of land between numerous households. These households relied
upon each other for mutual support, both in farm production and in social arenas. Fathers
often purchased entirely new farms for their sons to operate. In contrast, without that
family support households had to make a different choice. More socially oriented
consumption underscored the ways in which these households tried to create social
networks with other families. In the absence of a strong family network, Abram Wyatt
lost some measure of control of the household resources to his wife, whose father
provided the necessary financial support.

Finally, I have tried to explore how issues of consumption and consumer choice
cannot be treated as divorced from issues of production. The households under
investigation were all farms, and while they were gradually being incorporated into the
larger consumer culture, they were also being incorporated in to the larger capitalist
model of intensive agriculture. The choices these households made, in terms of their
economic and labor resources, were all intertwined. Thus, any decision had to be
balanced against what it was an implicit decision against. These choices affected both
what archaeologists have traditionally regarded as “consumer goods” as well as
investment in the property and productive capacity of their farms. Consumption is not merely an activity engaged in by consumers. While I am not discounting the role it plays in crafting and maintaining a social role for an individual and a household, it must be remembered that consumption is part of a larger process. This process includes everything from production and distribution to the ultimate disposal of the items. As historical archaeology is situated at the tail-end of this process, it is tempting, and perhaps methodologically and theoretically simpler, to treat these stages of a process as separate processes in and of themselves. We do this to our own detriment however, as situating each stage as it relates to the others helps generate a more nuanced and interesting understanding of the past which created our present.

Historical archaeologists have long noted the importance of consumer behavior, especially in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. However, archaeological interpretations of consumer behavior tend to focus narrowly on race or status. While anthropologists have often mentioned the importance of factors such as the household's age structure, lifecycle, and kin relationships within the context of the wider community, archaeologists have paid less attention to these factors. Using data from the excavations of eighteen farms in the Finger Lakes National Forest, occupied through the 19th century and into the 1930s, I have demonstrated how these households were not discreetly bounded units, but interacted with other farms both as family and as neighbors.

By shifting the focus of consumer choice from the “big three” of race, gender, and class/status, a consideration of age accomplishes several important ends. It adds a
dimension of temporality to the discussion; how households aged and how consumption changed in response to the aging process moves a household from consideration in a single timeless point history to a moment in its history, and encourages an exploration of how these changes manifested over time. A focus on age also necessitates a consideration of how one household is connected to others through issues of sociability, kinship, and production. When these issues are all considered concurrently from a standpoint of consumer behavior, the ties between households, both as kinship, which I have focused on, and as socially connected neighbors become a vital piece to understanding the past. Finally, a consideration of how age influences consumer choice furthers our understanding of the emergence of modern consumer culture. Rather than view all of the past as occupied by identical households slowly becoming more invested in consumer culture, a consideration of age shows how this consumer culture was adopted differently by different households, and how these changes were based at least partially in time. As new, young households supplant the old, consumption increasingly went from a luxury to a de facto standard of behavior. By households with age in mind, we avoid painting all households in a time period with the same brush, and can look at how differential adoption of consumer culture was about more than the financial ability to purchase.
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