



Memorial: Mary C. Beaudry (1950–2020)

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Mary Beaudry died unexpectedly on 20 October 2020. She was still teaching at Boston University, where she had been since 1980, but was counting the days to retirement, if she could just get that last book—her 14th—published (Fig. 1).

Mary was a student of James Deetz, and like Deetz she trained and inspired a whole generation—maybe two—of students who have become, and will become, leaders in the field of historical archaeology. Mary was a consummate teacher, not just in the classroom, but out in the world. The first time she visited me in Philadelphia we went to an exhibit at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts that featured images of 18th-century dignitaries, and she regaled me with descriptions of the pins they used to hold their clothes together. She had just published *Findings* (Beaudry 2006), a wonderful book about needlework and sewing tools, and could not stop herself from thinking about how things were put together. The last time she visited—in 2018—her student, Jade Luiz, had just defended her dissertation about prostitution, and Mary could not stop talking about it. She was so proud of Jade and so excited by her insights.

As much as Mary loved the Red Sox, she loved her students more. She took them (the students, that is) out to dinner at professional meetings and made celebratory dinners for them when they finished their degrees. She



Fig. 1 Mary Beaudry with the Harrington Medal, 2013.

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guided graduate students through their research and did her best to see that they got good jobs when they finished. Undergraduates were introduced to the multiplicity of

subjects within the field. At her death, Mary was teaching a course in Viking archaeology—not something most of us could do. She kept up on everything and published on just about everything. Her first major book, *Documentary Archaeology in the New World*, published by Cambridge University Press in 1988, is still a basic reference in the field (Beaudry 1988), and her last, *The Historical Archaeology of Shadow and Intimate Economies* (co-edited with James A. Nyman and Kevin R. Fogle), reflects the global direction historical archaeology has taken in the last few years (Nyman et al. 2019). Mary was global before the rest of us caught on. With Jim Symonds, a cherished colleague and collaborator, she published *Interpreting the Early Modern World: Transatlantic Perspectives* (Beaudry and Symonds 2011). Even before that, in collaboration with another valued British colleague, Dan Hicks, she made sure that many of the articles in *The Cambridge Companion to Historical Archaeology* (Hicks and Beaudry 2006) were at least coauthored by a non-American and were international in flavor. With her many collaborations, Mary broadened her own perspective as well as ours.

Besides serving as a full professor in Boston University's College of Arts and Sciences, Mary taught courses in gastronomical archaeology in the university's Metropolitan College. She was rather proud of being the only person we knew who could claim the titles of both professor of archaeology and professor of gastronomy. She and Karen Metheny published an encyclopedia of the archaeology of food in 2015 (Metheny and Beaudry 2015). Mary was an excellent cook and was fascinated by aspects of dining in the past and in the present.

Mary lived a life of service to her field and received many honors. She was the editor of *Northeast Historical Archaeology*, the juried journal of the Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology, for many years and was the president of the Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) from 1989 to 1990. In 2005 she was elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, and in 2013 she received the SHA's J. C. Harrington Medal for lifetime contributions to the field. Mary was enormously generous, both professionally and personally, often simultaneously. If you sat with her during the banquet at the SHA annual meeting you could be confident that she would buy wine for the table, and, at what turned out to be her last SHA conference, she treated everyone at the Thursday night reception to her beloved New England seafood. She wanted us all to love oysters the way she did, and she wanted oystermen to survive the pandemic. Just before her death in

October of 2020 she was ordering oysters long distance to keep the fishermen in business.

Mary fell in love with historical archaeology during the first undergraduate course she took at the College of William and Mary and never fell out of love. She loved the dirt, she loved the artifacts, and she especially loved the stories you could tell from it all—stories of the Boot Mill girls in Lowell, of Lady Sara Kirke's bodkin that was "more than a hair pin," and of brothel keeper, Mrs. Lake, who married Dr. William Padelford to add respectability to her operation. In her seminal article, "Artifacts and Active Voices: Material Culture as Social Discourse" (Beaudry et al. 1991), written with Lauren Cook and Steve Mrozowski, Mary showed us what an interpretive archaeology could and should be. In her career she showed us how.

Mary Beaudry was a storyteller, a scholar, and a great teacher. She was also a very good friend. Her students will carry on.

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