Reconstructing Critical Perspectives: An Excursus on the Archaeological Interpretations of Power & Ideology in the William Paca Garden

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Reconstructing Critical Perspectives:
An Excursus on the Archaeological Interpretations of Power & Ideology in the William Paca Garden

Senior Project submitted to
The Division of Social Studies
of Bard College
by
Frankie Witzenburg

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
May 2016
For my father, Gary M. Witzenburg  
December 7th, 1940 - June 28th, 2013

Thank you for teaching me that living means more than merely existing,
I miss you more than words could possibly express.
PS. It's been three years and I still haven't gotten any better at math, my bad.
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Introduction

If you had asked me how I felt about the state of Maryland at any point during the past 20 years of my life, I would have told you that I absolutely detested it. The area I grew up in, a town called Chevy Chase (no, not like the actor), was named the snobbiest town in America earlier this year, and not a single soul was surprised about it. My county is a strange combination of suburbia and city, sprinkled with a dash of forests and parks, all connected by roads plagued with potholes that may very well be eternal. Being so close to Washington, D.C. means a truly despicable amount of traffic at virtually any hour of any day, and the people living around me seemed to be caught in a perpetual battle of who can make the ugliest addition to their already unnecessarily large homes. I think the buildings around me were the worst part, and not just because of the questionable design choices of their owners. Many of the buildings just weren’t that old; my town felt new, awkward, and topical, like a hastily planted garden that simply refused to sink its roots firmly into the ground. I felt a similar sense of disconnect to the world as I lived there, as though I couldn’t plant my roots, either. But I always felt grounded in Annapolis.

I wish was to say that I could remember the first time I set foot in downtown Annapolis, but my eldest sister has lived in the area for my entire life, so the first time I visited I was likely a very small baby who understood little to nothing about history, architecture, or archaeology. As a small child, however, I remember being absolutely floored by the cobblestone streets and the coziness of feeling enveloped by the tall, mismatched buildings that seemed to buzz with some kind of energy I just couldn’t put my finger on. The waterfront too was a source of great excitement for my young self. I remember sitting on the docks with my legs dangling over the edge, throwing bread at the ducks lazily floating about below me and thinking that there was so
much water that it just had to go on forever. The first thing I realized as I got older was that the water did not in fact go on forever, considering it was only a part of the Chesapeake Bay and not the ocean I seemed to have thought it was. The second thing I realized was the energy I felt as a small child is what I now personally identify as the energy of an unknown endurance. The pull I feel towards old cities, towns, buildings and streets is a result of this energy—it is a desire to know and understand all that these structures have seen in their centuries of existence, to move through the rooms and alleyways as the people who perished long before my birth had once done. The feeling of existing in an old town or city is the feeling of walking through a world humming with centuries worth of secrets. As I got older, my ideas on what those secrets could be, and who they could possibly belong to, took on an entirely different perspective.

I think that it is safe to say that the way American history is taught to K-12 students in this country is questionable at best. Much of what is learned is taught through decidedly important isolated people and events, and though the atrocities of the past are touched upon, they are often followed up with narratives of progress to reassure the young American public that things are in a perpetual state of improvement. What is left unsaid is that these atrocities are often the cost of progress: the vanquishing of opposition to the projected ideas of what the ‘right’ future ought to look like, and their influences and effects are not trapped in the past, but are very much alive and at work in the present day. Another peculiar aspect of my Maryland upbringing is the way slavery and racism were framed throughout my educational career. Montgomery County, my home county, is all-in-all a fairly ‘liberal’ place. Some 60% of registered voters are
Democrats, we’ve got a Trader Joe’s in most every shopping center, and you can even see the blue and yellow equal sign stickers from the Human Rights Campaign on roughly six out of ten cars that will pass you by at any given location. But when we talked about slavery and racism in the classroom, it was always posed as a problem which took place somewhere else. While we learned that Maryland was below the Mason-Dixon Line, I still had at least three history teachers tell their classes that “Maryland was as good as North”, as if the North wasn’t built through the exploitation of other human beings, either. As I became more and more aware of these holes in my education, in everyone’s education, the tone of the energy emanating from the buildings during my visits to Annapolis took a darker, and what I believe to be more realistic, turn.

The brief history I will now give of Annapolis and partially of Maryland prior to the American Revolution is one that will be fairly linear, a formation of historical inquiry I do not find particularly savory. However I believe a general outline of the founding of the area, in addition to the establishment of some of its decidedly noteworthy features, is important in understanding the rest of my project. The colony of Maryland was established in the 1634 by the Calvert family, who were gifted the land and the title “Lord Baltimore” by the English Crown (Potter 1994:70). The land which was to become Annapolis, the area around the mouth of the Severn River, was settled in 1649 by a group of Puritans escaping religious persecution in the neighboring colony of Virginia (Potter 1994:70). For its first fifty years of existence, the town served as a piece of a larger system dedicated to bringing in profits for the Calvert family through tobacco farming and “on the land speculation attendant on an agricultural economy in a frontier area” (Potter 1994:70). Still a reasonably small settlement, a series of legal actions were put into place to establish Annapolis as a port of entry in order to award it legal and economic
importance (Potter 1994:70). In 1689, Maryland ceased to be a Catholic-lead proprietary
government and became a royal one, seeing five royal governors through 1715 when Maryland’s
proprietorship was restored when the fourth Lord Baltimore converted to Protestantism (Potter
1994:71). The second royal governor of the colony, Sir Francis Nicholson, decided to establish
Annapolis as the new capital of the colonies in 1694, which stripped St. Mary’s City of the title.

Nicholson was not only responsible for the shift in title, but also for the town plan one
can still see parts of in the historic district of Annapolis in the present-day. Instead of wiping the
little settlement clean, Nicholson “superimposed a baroque plan on the few streets already
there” (Leone and Hurry 1998:39). The plan, still known as the 1696 Nicholson Plan, was
comprised of two large circles with a series of smaller streets radiating off of them as well as a
large, public square, all laid upon a series of hills and ridges. Drawing upon his knowledge of
landscape architecture in London and Versailles, he also set out the spaces for the “statehouse,
Anglican church, school, and a whole set of houses” (Leone and Hurry 1998:39). The smaller
circle in the plan contained St. Anne’s Church, whereas the larger was home to Maryland’s new
statehouse; the small roads which jutted off from the circles connected, effectively making a
physical link between church and state (Potter 1994:71). Archaeologists from Archaeology in
Annapolis, a group I will soon discuss, have determined that the town was not in fact planned
from a bird’s eye view, but was crafted with the perception of the area as a three-dimensional
space, and was deeply concerned with volume and properties of optics (Leone and Hurry
1998:41). The vistas which came off of the circles served to control the site of the viewer,
constantly directing their gaze towards either architectural representation of authority: the church
or the state (Leone and Hurry 1998:41).
Although the construction of the Nicholson Plan concluded around 1710, Annapolis remained relatively quiet until the mid-18th century. Annapolis began to gain a deeper understanding of how to work the tobacco market, and some of the wealthiest and most prominent planter families of the era began to move in and take advantage of this burgeoning market (Potter 1994:73). Archaeologists and historians have determined that by the 1730’s, wealth had drastically shifted in Annapolis virtually destroying the middle class, and thus falling into the hands of the few members of the already wealthy planter-gentry class (Potter 1994:74). Many consider the latter end of the 18th century to have been Annapolis’ “golden age”. The prior accumulation of wealth in the city, in addition to its place as the colonial capital, made it a hot spot for for “wealthy and important people from all over Maryland” (Potter 1994:74). It was during this time, from 1763-1774, that Annapolis’ selection of extravagant Georgian style homes were erected, including the house of William Paca, as well as the Chase-Lloyd, James Brice, and Hammond-Harwood Houses (Potter 1994:75). The years leading up to the American Revolution saw much internal conflict within the city, as there was a stark opposition between the loyalists and patriots. There was a local chapter of the Sons of Liberty, and many of the city’s patriots actively participated in rebellions against the Stamp Act in addition to staging their own Tea Party (Potter 1994:75). After the Revolution, the city’s golden age came to a close, and Baltimore overtook its position as the heart of the Chesapeake region.

From the colony’s very beginnings, slavery played a foundational and gruesome role in the development of the economic sector, particularly in the tobacco industry, though prior to 1690 many of the laborers were indentured servants from Europe (Chapelle 1986:24). When the colony was first established in 1642, the status of early enslaved persons was unclear. The
institution of slavery became incorporated and solidified in positive law in 1663, when the Assembly made it such that any Black person brought into the bounds of the colony would be enslaved for life, additionally mentioning that any children born to an enslaved person should do the same (Chapelle 1986:24). As the tobacco industry evolved, the enslaved population grew as well, especially in Anne Arundel and areas of the Western Shore (Chapelle 1986:40). As Annapolis was a port town, it would have seen the importation of captured Black human beings as one of its main ‘commodities’, particularly during the mid-18th century. While enslaved persons were technically protected from extreme abuse at the hands of those who imprisoned them, they did not hold many legal rights at all. The only instances in which they could “bring suit in court or testify on their own behalf” were limited to petitions for freedom, and although they were able to marry there were no legal protections in place to prevent the separation or destruction of families (Chapelle 1986:41). While they were unable to own property, they were in writing allowed to tend to a small patch of land in order to grow crops, herbs, and raise chickens (Chapelle 1986:41). Maryland did see a free Black population during the mid-18th century, although they only made up 1% of Maryland’s total Black population. Free Black residents often worked as field hands or house servants, some as craftsmen, and a select few “became independent farmers, owning land and raising crops in the same manner as white farmers did” (Chapelle 1986:41).

Although I do still feel the comfort and excitement of being surrounded by old buildings, I have come to view them with a sense of skepticism and concern. While the happy families I imagined as a child may very well have inhabited the houses and shops I passed by on the tight streets of Annapolis, I have become acutely aware of of the more hidden, violent, and resistant
narratives that most certainly animated those very streets centuries ago. I must admit that I hadn’t
the slightest idea that I would be able to incorporate these feelings I have harbored into my
senior project at the beginning of the year. I had originally planned on studying artifacts
unearthed on a site I had worked on in Germantown, New York. Although the site was certainly
fascinating and a joy to work on, I felt a lack of personal connection to the work I had started to
do. After having expressed an interest in the critical theory of The Frankfurt School to my
advisor, Christopher Lindner, he mentioned a group of Marxist archaeologists hard at work in my
beloved home state. The group, known as Archaeology in Annapolis, focuses on excavations
primarily in Annapolis, St. Mary’s City, and parts of Maryland’s Eastern Shore. As I will explain
in my first chapter, the primary goal of Archaeology in Annapolis is to reexamine the history of
the city, as well as how the city portrays its own history, in order to identify and unpack the
dominant ideologies at work both in the past and in the present. These archaeologists are also
dedicated to bringing this information to the general public in an accessible way, in order to
encourage people to take on a critical view of history and the way it is often recorded and taught
in modern day society. The aspects of my upbringing and education that I have explained above
left an incredibly bad taste in my mouth, but they also inspired me to approach the study of
history in a new and critical way. In doing preliminary reading on the inner workings of
Archaeology in Annapolis, I found myself vigorously nodding my head in agreement to the
approaches many of its archaeologists proposed to take, and became quite invested in exploring
how critical theory could be employed in archaeological endeavors.

The overall aim of this project is to examine the way historical archaeologists examine
history, particularly the Marxist archaeologists of Archaeology in Annapolis. The critical
theorists of The Frankfurt School place an incredibly heavy emphasis on the importance of self-reflection in any research-based endeavor, and I hope that the contents of this project will serve as a helpful commentary on the ways in which historical archaeology may approach the unpacking of ideology both past and present. Such a project most certainly has the potential of constituting one very large and extensive book, and unfortunately I do not yet have the time or expertise to embark on such an extensive journey. I thus decided to reflect on the theory and practice of Archaeology in Annapolis through an in depth examination of one particular site: the William Paca Garden. As I hope to one day become a college professor, the matter of education is of the utmost importance to me. It is with that sentiment that I decided to focus my project on historical archaeologist and founder of Archaeology in Annapolis Mark P. Leone’s 1984 interpretation of the William Paca Garden, “Interpreting Ideology in Historical Archaeology: Using the Rules of Perspective in the William Paca Garden in Annapolis, Maryland”. This piece of writing is used as an example in numerous archaeology and history textbooks, and the outcomes and methods within the piece are often taught to students in a positive light.

The first chapter of this project details the theoretical foundations of Archaeology in Annapolis as they are outlined by co-founder Parker B. Potter Jr. in his 1994 book, Public Archaeology in Annapolis: A Critical Approach to History in Maryland’s Ancient City. Archaeologists both within and outside of Archaeology in Annapolis consider Potter’s book to be the first in depth collection of the theoretical workings of AIA, and it is often referred to in many of the projects AIA have taken on throughout the years. In reading this book, I noticed that the explanations of these theories as they can be applied to archaeology were not elaborated upon using the texts of their original authors, but instead were summarized through work done by
author David Held, who wrote (an incredibly helpful) book which summarizes much of the work put forth by The Frankfurt School. Using Held’s book as a road map of sorts, I delved into the primary sources of the theories in order to provide a richer explanation of how they may be applied in historical archaeology.

My second chapter discusses a great number of topics all important to the goals of this paper. I begin by briefly discussing the life and times of William Paca, situating his position in mid-18th century Annapolitian society. I then move to give a detailed description of his garden, which I visited twice during of March in 2016. By the time the property has been purchased by Historic Annapolis in the 1970’s, the original garden had been destroyed and turned into a parking lot for one of the businesses which settled on the property. I thus give a brief description of the reconstruction process the garden endured, as I believe it is important to understand that some intellectual liberties had to be taken since much evidence of the original garden had been destroyed. As Paca’s house and garden were both of Georgian style, I move on to explain the mechanics of Georgian style as well as the impact these forms had on society from the 18th arguably into the present day. I then explain Leone’s interpretation of the garden, which incorporates all of the aforementioned topics in order to assert that William Paca’s garden was a physical manifestation of 18th century dominant ideology which served to reaffirm his powerful position within a nation about to be born. This chapter ends with a brief exploration of critical pieces that have been written in response to Leone’s work; all of which inspired my own critical take on the interpretation.

My third chapter launches into a direction I did not originally anticipate, but one I am very pleased I decided to follow. The point of departure in this chapter is the question of how
subjectivity fits into the reception of ideology, particularly in relation to an ideology just
beginning to find its footing in a society on the brink of a contradictory revolution. This is a
subject I found to be missing in Leone’s interpretation, and a subject I find to be incredibly
important to address when examining people who are long dead and thus no longer able to
exercise agency in modern conversations concerning their lifetimes. On this matter I make two
arguments. I first suggest that not everyone walking through Paca’s garden would have
experienced its ideological forces in the same way. I ground this argument in the archaeological
evidence of African and African American magico-religious practices that have been discovered
in Annapolis and other regions of Maryland. I then go on to discuss what must occur for a
dominant ideology to become dominant, another aspect of Leone’s piece that I found to be
lacking. I make the argument that there was a clash between conceptions of nature in 18th
century Annapolis, and that those who did not fit into the Enlightenment mold of nature often
had to pay for it with their lives.

This project is an exploratory piece meant to encourage anyone who studies history to do
so in a critical way. Although I do not feel as if I have made any ground-breaking discoveries in
the field of historical archaeology, I do believe that this piece reaffirms the importance of
intellectual reflection on one’s own academic pursuits.
Chapter 1: On Theory

Archaeology in Annapolis was founded in 1981 as a partnership between the Department of Anthropology at the University of Maryland and the Historic Annapolis Foundation. Since its conception, AIA has concerned itself with the perception of history and historical development in Maryland's capital. Mark P. Leone, founder of the school, “recognized that Annapolis was not just an old and well-preserved city but also a historic one” (Leone et al. 1987:284) and saw a need for an anthropologically geared study of the ways in which the city has depicted itself historically and the social and economic implications that resulted from the various historical depictions that have been constructed and utilized by the city over time. At the very outset of the program, Leone and the other founding members of the project discerned that the historical development of capitalism and industry Annapolis “did not exist in a vacuum” (Leone et al. 1987:284), and thus continued to have very real implications and effects on understandings of the current state of affairs in the city. In viewing history as both a past and present force, the archaeologists working to make out the material history of Maryland's capital recognized the need for a critical approach that would allow for an elucidation of the city’s past that did not blindly accept the present as the way things were meant to be. In addition to their dedication to local social and political interests, the school wished to demystify archaeology, making its tenets and practices not only intelligible to the nonacademic public, but open to critique and questioning by those receiving the information gained through archaeological processes. With these desires in mind, Archaeology in Annapolis, like many other Marxist archaeologists and anthropologists, turned to the writings of members of The Frankfurt School to guide their practices in a way that stayed true to their goals.
In following the theory that I will soon elaborate on, AIA made multiple dimensions of public involvement absolutely paramount to its practical dimensions. Since the summer of 1982, The Department of Anthropology at UMD has offered a 6 week long field school in Annapolis or the Eastern Shore region of Maryland, drawing most of its students from the undergraduate classes of UMD. In 2005, the field school had seen roughly 330 students move in and out of its ranks (Leone 2005:xii); 11 years later, the 2016 summer course list still features both lab and field methods courses centered around the sites and artifacts unearthed in Annapolis and its surrounding areas. The University of Maryland branch of AIA has also pulled students from its Masters in Applied Anthropology program, providing them with internships and other opportunities to work in tandem with AIA. In addition to creating opportunities for archaeology students, AIA has designed and guided a series of tours of sites in Annapolis, as well as inviting community members to work on site and in the labs as amateur archaeologists.

Archaeology in Annapolis prides itself in its new, civically engaged approach to the field of archaeology. Although it is undoubtedly concerned with contributing to the archaeological record and discourse within the field, AIA has taken up the tasks of

“[uncovering] contemporary inequalities in daily life, and [utilizing] public archaeology as a means of presenting the idea that these inequalities were not inevitable but instead could be corrected through archaeology” (Cochran 2001).

In order to meet its goals, the founders and current players in the AIA field have adapted critical theory, as it was laid out by foundational members of The Frankfurt School, as their framework. Born out of a reverence and dedication to Marxist thought, critical theory finds its foundation “with the characterization of an economy based on exchange” (Horkheimer 1972:225), in which the basis of society, both in its present existence and its historical formation, is class struggle. For
a devoted critical theorist of any discipline, class struggle is the source of all societal inequalities.

Implicit in inequality rooted in class struggle is the alienation of labor, or “the use of goods or services without a full return of value to [the] producer” (Leone et al. 1987:284). A society which locates its origins in inequality and exploitation finds itself in need of a way to perpetuate its very existence despite these shortcomings, concealing them from the masses. Capitalism, the society of which these theorists speak, has come to maintain its structure through the employment of ideology, which “hides and masks exploitation or rationalizes it by naturalizing or super naturalizing it” (Leone et al. 1987:284). When the present mode of society appears naturalized, inevitable, divinely ascribed, or invisible to the communities living within it, violence and resistance are minimized for it seems that there is no alternative way of life.

This particular conception of ideology is derived primarily from the French Marxist thinker Louis Althusser’s “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation”, and is understood archaeologically as it is anthropologically by Steve Barnett and Martin G. Silverman in Ideology and Everyday Life: Anthropology, Neomarxist Thought, and the Problem of Ideology and the Social Whole. In following a handful of Marx’s foundational works, Althusser understands that a social formation’s enduring existence is reliant upon its ability to “reproduce the conditions of its production at the same time as it produces” (Althusser 1971:128) so that it may continue to produce and ideally expand with little to no interruption. He goes on to divide the conditions of production into two categories: the productive forces and the existing relations of production, and informs his readers that the remainder of his essay will focus wholly on the latter category, or the reproduction of labor power. While wages, money given to the worker in exchange for their labor time, play a role in this reproductive effort, Althusser suggests
that there are other, nearly imperceptible forces at work. These forces are a weapon wielded by the State, a social formation which both Marx and Althusser have identified as “a repressive apparatus…which enables the ruling classes…to ensure their domination over the working class” (Althusser 1971: 137) in order to perpetuate the “process of surplus-value extortion”. Althusser elaborates on Marx’s theory of the State by breaking down the notion of a State apparatus into two categories: the Repressive State Apparatus, which functions primarily by violence (repression) and secondarily by ideology, and the Ideological State Apparatus (ISAs), which functions inversely to the Repressive State Apparatus. The former consists of administrative bodies such as the government, the army, the police, etc. while the latter, which ensures the reproduction of labor power, appears as specific institutions which could conventionally be seen as outside of the state, such as the family, religion, literature, and the educational system (both public and private).

Although these institutions may appear to be disjointed, they are in fact unified in their multiplicity insofar as “the ideology by which they function…is the ideology of the ‘ruling class’” (Althusser 1971:146). Moreover, Althusser asserts that no class who holds a monopoly on State power may do so for long without the utilization of Ideological State Apparatuses. In suggesting that “ideology represents the imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence” (Althusser 1971:162), or the alienation of person from labor, Althusser also posits that these representations of imaginary relations must appear natural, or as the only way things could possibly be. In other words, their imaginary character, their very status as ideological, must be concealed. Althusser explains that while Ideological State Apparatuses are an important tool of the ruling class, they are also often the “site of class struggle”, since “the class…in power cannot
lay down the law in the ISAs as easily as it can in the (repressive) State apparatus” (Althusser 1971:147). This ideological space of lessened power, often unlike that of directly repressive state bodies, may provide the subjugated classes with “means and occasions to express itself there, either by the utilization of their contradictions, or by conquering combat positions in them in struggle” (Althusser 1971:147). Historical archaeology often works in obtaining and interpreting sites and products of ISAs (churches, church records, manufactured ceramics, and so on), but it also works in determining how material culture may have been utilized by groups of people in ways unintended by the classes pulling the strings of those ISAs. Unearthing past expressions of the contradictions present in dominant ideologies would ideally shed light on the quieted alternatives to the prescribed norm, emphasizing the arbitrary nature of the dominant ideologies themselves. But in a society in which many of the dominant ideologies of the past still persist, how can this be done without reaffirming the oppressive norm?

Critical theory and, by extension, disciplines which dedicate themselves to critical theoretical frameworks of inquiry, ultimately seek to pierce the veil of ideology in order to expose and even transcend the inner workings of a capitalist society. Beyond setting their sights on the most integral goals of the Frankfurt School, Archaeology in Annapolis aligns itself even further with the tenets of this critical theory by adopting some of its most crucial standpoints. Parker B. Potter Jr., an historical archaeologist and former member of the Annapolis school, writes of these tenets in his 1994 book, *Public Archaeology in Annapolis: A Critical Approach to History in Maryland’s Ancient City*. Founded in his concerns for the overall relevance of archaeology, shared by many other members of the school, Potter asserts that four particular aspects of critical theory would allow archaeologists to examine material history with a critical
eye: “(1) the particular, (2) self-reflection, (3) antipositivism, and (4) the integration of theory and practice” (Potter 1994:27). Although these notions have not been quite so explicitly delineated in other works by members of Archaeology in Annapolis, their significance is consistently referenced throughout, as well as by Marxist archaeologists practicing outside of the school, such as Christopher Matthews, Stephen Mrozowski, and Allison Wylie. In order to understand the foundation and purpose of Archaeology in Annapolis, a complex understanding of these axioms is required.

The overall aim of traditional theory, juxtaposed to critical theory in Max Horkheimer's foundational piece, “Traditional and Critical Theory”, is the formation of a harmonious and totalizing system of knowledge. Scientific inquiry from this approach seeks to “define universal concepts under which all facts in the field in question are to be subsumed” (Horkheimer 1972:224). This mode of thought sets out to obtain knowledge that is free of any contradiction, thus “in relation to facts…a theory always remains a hypothesis. One must be ready to change it if its weaknesses begin to show as one works through the material” (Horkheimer 1972:188). In other words, the kind of knowledge procured through methods based in traditional theory begin with a concept and pursue facts that will support said concept. Should the facts prove the concept null in any way, the theory is modified so that the facts and their designated concepts may continue to exist without conflict, despite the potential implications of the conflicts that may emerge throughout the duration of this process. Here, “the objective occurrence is independent of the theory, and this independence is part of its necessity: the observer as such can effect no change in the object” (Horkheimer 1972:229). The false appearance of a fixed object of inquiry has a series of implications for the quality of knowledge such an approach produces, as well as
the quality of the very approach itself. This methodology allows for the appearance of a wholly neutral observer who seeks only to describe the object “as it is”, never fearing that observations could alter the object or the knowledge derived from it. The validity of the concept the researcher wishes to encompass the object with is also presupposed, dictating how theories are formulated in order to create facts that further legitimize them.

Adorno coins this manner of thought “identity thinking”. Like Horkheimer’s schema of traditional theory, identity thinking wishes to locate the particular within pre-established universal concepts. Adorno pinpoints “identity [as] the primal form of ideology” in that its basis, adequacy (harmony in Horkheimer’s terms), “has always been subjection to dominant purposes” (Adorno 1973:148); the “dominant purposes” being those forces which generate a heavy emphasis on these concepts. When an identity or concept is formed, “what has happened to it must be presented, by the thing, as its ‘in itself’” (Adorno 1973:148). Facts whose conceptions begin with these identities serve only to reify them; the label of scientific fact allowing them to appear natural, or “in itself”. Both Horkheimer and Adorno call for a radical reformulation of this approach, emphasizing the significance of the contradictions that are so eagerly skirted proponents of purely empirical research. Conversely, nonidentity thinking is constituted by a “reciprocal criticism of the universal and of the particular; identifying acts of judgement whether the concept does justice to what it covers, and whether the particular fulfills its concept” (Adorno 1973:146).

By rejecting the notion that each particular can be subsumed under a concept, and by fostering a two-way relationship immanent in the examination of the universal and the particular, the researcher gets closer to unpacking the particular in that its ascribed purpose is no longer to uphold the concept. Furthermore, the contradictions found from within could very well indicate
“the insufficiency of the concept” (Adorno 1973:151). In his “Notes on Institute Activities”, Horkheimer makes the explicit claim that “induction in social theory… should delve deeper and deeper into the particular and discover the universal law therein” (Horkheimer 1989a:266). Instead of formulating or maintaining concepts through carefully selecting particular historical occurrences in order to piece them together into a supposedly cohesive whole, he suggests that examining the particular, in relation to other particulars examined with equal fervor, could build concepts which incorporate particular occurrences in their truest possible entirety.

In accordance with both Adorno and Horkheimer, Potter states that “identity thinking is simply bad science” (Potter 1994:28). He makes the claim that anyone who partakes in identity thinking cannot accurately see the individual case as it is, since this mode of thought often neglects important and formative historical contexts and influences. He also follows Adorno’s assertion that identity is a base form of ideology in that “many of the ideologies that critical theories challenge misrepresent the interests of one segment of society as universal interests” and thus “by attending to particular circumstances and detecting their particularities, critical theorists are better able to recognize threats to local interests” (Potter 1994:28). Potter contends that it is in the desire to acknowledge and serve local interest that nonidentity thinking, as it is formulated in critical theoretical texts, finds its place in archaeology. He argues that there is a tendency in archaeology to,

“subsume the particular into conceptual categories, artifacts into classes, and sites into complexes and phases is to take archaeology out of local history (or local history out of archaeology) and make it the exclusive property of the professionals who create and manipulate categories” (Potter 1994:28).
This in turn will cause the information formed by the aforementioned archaeological categories to be accessible only to those with prior knowledge of them. While this arguably achieves relevance within the field of archaeology itself, it fails to prove relevant or attainable by members of the community in which the site or sites in question are situated. Additionally, the practice of nonidentity thinking in archaeology serves to provide a more detailed understanding of “historical moments and contexts” (Potter 1994:27), allowing archaeologists and historians alike to depict a more nuanced historical account of the location in which they find themselves working, a depiction which on principle would not gloss over the barbarisms of the past in favor of focusing on the victor or dominating class in a particular historical instance.

Although the great minds of critical theory often find themselves disagreeing with, and yet building upon one another’s works, there is a shared reverence for the place of self-reflection in any study one could undertake. Such a conception is entirely absent in the world of empiricism, positivism, and traditional theory for in such frameworks there is a totalizing acceptance of objectivism, doing away with the idea of “the subject”, or the socially removed researcher, entirely. As was previously mentioned, the subject in a traditional approach to inquiry is seen as neutral, leading them to view “social reality and its products as extrinsic to him” (Horkheimer 1972:209). The individual seen as such sensorially receives information that is given by society in the form of already constituted objects. This suggests that researchers’ specific context (age, sex, upbringing, location, personal moral compass, etc.) is not relevant to what they are studying in that they are not actively obtaining information so much as passively receiving it. When a decontextualized, supposedly neutral observer meets the object of their research, they are therefore unable to effect any change on that object since their own context is
radically separate from the object, which is viewed as fixed to the point that no scientific excursion could change it. Even if it were to be shown, through proper scientific research, that “the objective even is influenced by human intervention”, it would be yet another fact established by the scientific world (Horkheimer 1972:229). If the researching subjects are conceived of as neutral or passive, and if the contents of the object of study are fixed and predetermined, then there is no room for the traditional theorists to ponder either themselves or the method of scientific inquiry they have taken up for there appears to be no point in doing so.

On the contrary, critical theory rejects this objectivism as well as its opposite of total subjectivism, which posits that individuals’ consciousness projects and manifests their own respective worlds. Rather, the subject in critical theory is,

“a definite individual in his real relation to other individuals and groups, and in his conflict with a particular class, and, finally, in the resultant web of relationships with the social totality and with nature” (Horkheimer 1972:211)

If society is a process that is moved forward through the process of class struggle which is played out through the struggles not only of the masses but also by the adherence to dominant ideology by the uniformed individuals who make up those masses, then the researcher is inherently a part of that societal process. Self-reflection would allow the scientific researcher to evaluate their own position in society in terms of what interests their quests serve, what the possible outcomes of their interests could be, how their own personal history and context could influence the outcome of their study, and how the results of their study could influence the broader world. Moreover, when a researcher self-reflects and comes to the realization that they are an active subject, their own internal sense of potentiality changes. No longer are they only capable of seeing and describing, producing work that can be fit productively and neatly into the
grand schema of science. Now, when they gaze upon “the sordid state of the world, desire to change it becomes the guiding principle by which he organizes given facts and shapes them into a theory” (Horkheimer 1972:162).

The Annapolis School of Archaeology, along with much of the rest of the discipline is beginning to come to terms with the undeniable importance of self-reflection in practicing archaeology. While former schools of thought in the field grappled with how to make archaeology relevant to contemporary life, Leone (and many other critical archaeologists) argue that historical examinations of issues that reify and find themselves alive in the present can take on highly political lives and that “archaeological interpretations presented to the public may acquire meaning unintended by the archaeologist and not to be found in the data” (Leone et al. 1987:284). Furthermore, archaeology has been used “to change the value of property in towns and cities in connection with changing the locales of different wealth and ethnic groups” (Leone et al. 1987:284). A dedication to self-reflection would allow for archaeologists to situate themselves within the whole: to more precisely explain the outcomes of their research and its implications as well as viewing archaeology as an institution that is potentially in the position to be used in ways that perpetuate modes of domination that serve the very ideologies that critical theory wishes to expose. Additionally, self-reflection employed by the field of study as a whole would allow for an examination of the accessibility and accuracy of information obtained through archaeological means. These two tenets are often times wholly incompatible with the dominating approach to scientific inquiry, one which critical theorists decisively break away from.
This aforementioned approach is known as “positivism”. It is a scientific philosophical framework which finds its origins in the growth of the natural sciences during the Enlightenment. This framework operates on many of the guidelines maintained by traditional theory in that “the ideal it pursues is knowledge in the form of a mathematically formulated universal science” (Horkheimer 1972:138). In its purest form, all facts and objects would be explained seamlessly through this logically calculated system whose validity would be presupposed at the outset of a scientific investigation. These facts are obtained through a removed and methodological process of observation that is faithfully dedicated to objectivity. Within a positivist framework, “the distinction between what an entity is and what it appears to be is altogether meaningless” (Horkheimer 1972:139) because all true knowledge is derived through sensory perception and experience. The appearance of the object to the observer is its entity, for “only experience, purified experience…is called knowledge” (Horkheimer 1972:138) in a positivist undertaking. If knowledge can only be constituted on the results of sensory observation, if objects are seen as ahistorical and unchangeable, and if the observer is always seen as perfectly neutral, then it follows that “value judgements cannot be accorded to the status of knowledge claims” (Held 1980:164). Furthermore, the goal of positivist science is not “construction, but induction” (Horkheimer 1972:144). In taking the “natural laws” reified by prior scientific excursions as the true groundwork for all future scientific investigations, positivist science does not seek to explore the possibilities of alternative understandings of reality. Rather, positivist science wishes to subsume every possible occurrence into its order, for “nothing is allowed to remain outside, since the mere idea of the ‘outside’ is the real source of fear” (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002:11). That which remains outside of its schema in a particular
moment poses a threat to its very validity and so “one can either change physical laws that come into conflict with new observations or refuse to acknowledge the new elements” (Horkheimer 1972:144) as relevant to scientific knowledge entirely.

Although positivism was founded in the natural sciences, its development and subsequent sophistication (not to be mistaken for progress) allowed for its practitioners to extend its precepts and methodological systems into the realm of the social sciences. Although it is a feat that has yet to be accomplished, according to Horkheimer, society too “[would] be completely clarified and brought into suitable relation with the underlying factors of the total system” (Horkheimer 1972:139). The notion of a positivist approach to the social sciences proves to be problematic for a series of reasons. If a set of natural laws were to be determined for society, as has been done for nature, and if the goals of these mathematically calculated systems is to create a way to reliably predict outcomes based on the prior success of these systems, then the results of social scientific investigations would be framed as inevitable and without alternatives. By the same token, a reduction of social occurrences into mathematical formulas and outcomes based on experiential observations would fail to view society as a historical process formed through contradiction. Unlike nature, “men and women… make history; nature is not, in any parallel sense, made by them” (Held 1980:168). In other words, an idea of congruous natural laws that govern society in a foreseeable way would make society appear to be timeless and uniform in its development, even though the history of society in all of its moments is reliant upon “context and peculiarity of particular epochs” (Held 1980:168). A set of natural laws which rule society would suggest that the structures of society are naturally occurring and not a product of the economically influenced social processes present in any given moment. Lastly, if the critical theoreticians of the Frankfurt
school are correct in identifying the root of all inequality in society as class struggle and exploitation, and if positivist social science would fail to see this development due to its inability to account for that which is not sensuously perceptible, then any blindly positivist attempt to understand any form of social inequality would likely produce false explanations or notions of inequality, further masking the true state of society and thus contributing to the capitalist ideological conquest of burying the contradictions which continue to fuel its development.

Potter, like other archaeologists both in The Annapolis School and those engaged in critically informed archaeology elsewhere, condemn New Archaeology for taking a heavily positivist approach and that is thus “no doubt responsible for the general lack of self-reflection in contemporary archaeology” (Potter 1994:31). According to archaeological philosopher Alison Wylie, New Archaeology’s quest for relevance to the broader scientific world lead it to seek out a uniform method that could be used to reliably interpret the past. Not only would such a method allow “archaeologists…to establish an explanatory understanding of long-term, large-scale cultural dynamics”, but the results of such a discovery could prove to have “pragmatic value” (Wylie 2002:154), a form or value held in the highest regard by positivist sciences. In its total reliance on the scientific method, New Archaeology failed to reflect on its own processes and biases by “limiting knowledge to what can be observed or experiences, by confining investigation to the use of a verifiable theory of meaning, and by granting no status to knowledge inaccessible to experience” (Potter 1994:31). While the same pitfalls of positivism in general are present in a positivist approach to archaeology, a series of special hazards become apparent when one studies history through a positivist lens.
An uncritical study of history that maintains the apparent incompatibility of fact and value judgements, an exclusive reliance upon that which is immediately perceptible as the only pure form of knowledge, and a lack of an active subject assumes that “what is is what (with certain amounts of moderate adjustments) ought to be” (Held 1980:168). In many instances, an object’s immediate context and use, as well as the previously established body of knowledge that surrounds it, may not be its entire history. The processes through which objects are passed from hand to hand, or how they came into being, may radically transform their supposed status as purely utilitarian or aesthetic to something much more. In “Theses on the Philosophy of History”, Walter Benjamin asserts:

“there is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism. And just as such a document is not free of barbarism, barbarism taints also the manner in which [objects are] transmitted from one owner to another” (Benjamin 1969:256).

Investigating the way in which the objects of archaeological inquiry come to be where they are, and therefore taking into account the places in which they are not and the places in which they could have been, allow the archaeologist to view these objects of study as a part of a historical process that was, in Benjamin’s terms, inherently reliant upon violence and oppression. In acknowledging the historical growth of society and its material manifestations as a process dependent on the intentional subjugation of others, one can deduce that the prospect of alternative ways of existence had to be quashed in order to preserve the interests of the victors of history. In other words, society in the present day isn’t the way it is due to its constant formulation towards a teleological end, as is implied in the belief that society is governed by natural laws. Rather, society is the way it is because of the intentional and often violent motives.
that were designated by those who had enough power to successfully pursue them. To study
history or archaeology from within the closed system of positivism would be not only to affirm
oppressive society, but to possibly aid in the perpetuation of its dominance by affirming “a social
formation that contains inequality…[and by making] knowledge a zero-sum game” (Potter
1994:32). In other words, this kind of knowledge still works support dominant norms, and its
production benefit those in the highest position or power, aiding in the inevitable oppression of
those who do not enjoy the same dominating positions.

This is not to say, however, that the empirical methods of obtaining and organizing
information are entirely incompatible with critical theory or the sciences that choose to take up a
critical theoretical approach to their tasks. In his lecture, “The State of Contemporary Social
Philosophy and the Tasks of an Institute for Social Research”, Horkheimer suggests that “an
ongoing dialectical permeation and evolution of philosophical theory and empirical-scientific
praxis” (Horkheimer 1989b:31) may be the answer to reconciling the two. Although it would not
be an easy process, requiring years of work and the collaboration of countless thinkers,
Horkheimer believes,

“philosophy is able to inject spiritual impulses into empirical research through its own
theoretical intention towards the whole… while being open enough to be itself influenced
and transformed by the developments in concrete research” (Horkheimer 1989b:32).

Similarly, a critical archaeology would not be an outright rejection of the empiricist focus that
dominated New Archaeology. Wylie commends Leone and Handsman for their portrayal of this
imperative in that they provide a framework for “rejecting or revising ideological distorted views
of the past by exploiting the very empirical-analytic methods and standards of epistemic
adequacy” (Wylie 2002:159) in order to show the validity of their new approach. By utilizing the
objectivist tactics and of positivist archaeology in a way such that the inconsistencies of their allegedly rigid and predetermined nature, Leone and Handsman take up the dialectical approach Horkheimer believes can transform the field of social sciences. It is with this strategy that Leone and Potter alike identify critical archaeology not as a departure from New Archaeology, but as a self-critical extension of it. The very move to do so is itself is a self-reflexive critique of the historical development of the archaeological institution.

Paired with an analytic skepticism of positivism, a critical awareness of the relationship between theory and practice is paramount in initiating a truly critical research process. In “History and Class Consciousness”, Lukacs elaborates on Karl Marx’s concept of historical materialism to exemplify how theory is inextricably tied to praxis. Marx’s conception of historical materialism was grounded in Hegel’s notion of history as it is formed through a dialectic of the antagonistic forces of the class struggle. Humankind must work to produce things that will fulfill the needs that must be met in order to survive (food, water, etc). There are two pieces that comprise what Marx has coined “a mode of production”. First, there are the means of production, or the physical components that are required to make the material goods that will meet the needs of humanity. Second, there are the social relations of productions, which are the relationships people must enter with one another in order to navigate the use and implementation of the former. For Marx, the capitalist mode of production and its integral class distinctions became dangerously outweighed in that the means of production, namely technology, became far more advanced than that of the social relations involved in production. The means of production fell into the hands of a select few, or the bourgeoisie, who sought to make a monetary profit (or surplus) off of the goods their technology could produce at ever-increasing rates. Those who did
not fall into this class, the proletariat, were forced to sell their labor, at the lowest possible price determined by the bourgeoisie so as to maximize profit, in exchange for money which would theoretically allow them to purchase the goods they required to survive. Marx argues that this process alienated the laborer from the goods they made in that the proletariat’s carefully calculated wages did not allow them to access the goods they themselves produced. In other words, the productive forces of the bourgeoisie were dependent on the exploitation of the proletariat, who were not properly compensated for their work and who were wrenched away from that which their bodies produced. Because the success of the dominant class was dependent upon the exploitation of the lower class, everything must be done to conceal the unbalanced relationships between the two so that the proletariat may keep on laboring, enabling the bourgeoisie to accumulate more and more wealth.

Marx holds that “it is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness” (Marx 1999). It follows, then, that a social existence based on the concealment of dominating forces in order to perpetuate said forces would result in a false or skewed consciousness. Historical materialism, the acknowledgement of historical growth as a dialectical process, would “deliver a precise judgement on the capitalist social system, to unmask capitalist society” (Lukacs 1968:224). While Lukacs indeed acknowledges the scientific purpose of creating knowledge in such an endeavor, he points out that “historical materialism did not exist for its own sake”, or as “an elucidation of pure scientific knowledge” (Lukacs 1968:224) rather, it exists in order to provide insight into the discrepancies present in capitalist society, pulling the proletariat out of their previous false-consciousness, and thus disrupting the system which operates due to that consciousness’s survival. For the
bourgeoisie to accept the scientific validity of historical materialism would be to throw away the validity of bourgeois existence, a belief that is vital to the continuation of bourgeois control. Conversely, it would be detrimental for the proletariat to only acknowledge historical materialism as a scientific endeavor, for “the essence of the class struggle of the proletariat can in fact be defined by its union of theory and practice so that knowledge leads to action without transition” (Lukacs 1968:225). The achievement of self-consciousness of the proletariat is both theoretical and active. Unlike positivist or bourgeois approaches to the acquisition of knowledge, critical theorists and researchers alike recognize that knowledge cannot be formed objectively or separately from those who form it. Theory thus cannot be severed from the interests of those discovering and implementing it. A researcher’s failure to pay mind to the relationship between theory and interests, and thus the practice that becomes entangled in them, could lead to a dangerous misappropriation of theoretical frameworks. The faulty appearance of a neutral theory, resulting from the obliviousness of its conceiver(s), would allow for the creation of an apparently neutral action, risking the reification of deceptively neutral ideas, or ideologies.

It is the aforementioned misappropriation of theory that most concerns critical archaeologists. Earlier in his book, Potter identifies this danger in the first chapter of William Kelso’s 1984 *Kingsmill Plantations, 1619-1800*, which discusses the slave-master relationship, along with the general quality of life for slaves in Colonial Virginia in a section labeled “things”, as opposed to the other two sections entitled “land” and “people”. Similarly, John Solomon Otto’s 1984 *Cannon’s Point Plantation, 1794-1860* sets out to assess the living conditions of slaves through a systematized approach which is reliant on numerical data: the square footage of living quarters, the number of possessions allowed to slaves, and the composition and effectiveness of
slaves’ mandated diets. Potter contends that Kelso, who is writing in the 20th century, is reaffirming 18th century social structures in the present day in that his modern production replicates the classification of enslaved people as “things”. Otto’s strategy “allows [him] to measure the quality of slave life without confronting its central fact, namely bondage” (Potter 1994:16). By choosing to approach the topic in a calculated, experientially grounded, value-judgement-free way, Otto mimics the calculations made by slave owners to justify and excuse their barbaric enslavement of other human beings. Even if slaves lived in adequately sized quarters or consumed decently balanced diets, their condition of life was still that of enslavement, and no quantity of superficial amenities could equally amount to freedom. By Potter’s account, the theoretical approaches and decisions employed by these archaeologists failed to recognize the interests which gave way to their conception and historical applications. In following the interconnectivity of theory and practice, these unreflectively employed theories worked to maintain ideological categories of inhumanity and misguided conceptions of enslavement.

The strategic mistakes made by the archaeologists outlined above are in direct contradiction with the aims of a critical archaeology. Potter locates the purpose of such a practice to be the attainment of emancipatory and enlightening knowledge. Here, enlightenment does not mean the kind of scientific and/or philosophical revelations that came about in the 18th century, but rather entails the elucidation of ideologies, or misrepresentations of social reality in the “masking or naturalizing of social inequality” (Potter 1994:34). Emancipation refers to the act of gaining freedom from these ideologies that have been revealed to those dominated by them. Enlightenment, as a form of thought, and emancipation, as a form of action, go hand-in-hand.
This relationship or process, as it is described by Potter and the other members of Archaeology in Annapolis, is the archaeological implementation of a form of historical materialism based in the critical theory of the Frankfurt School. When an archaeologist adheres to the tenets of critical theory as they have been explained above (the particular, self-reflection, and antipositivism), the deconstruction of the present as inevitable becomes a distinct possibility. Through the piercing of ideology, the exposition of the dialectical or contradictory nature of the development of history, it becomes clear that “different decisions could have been made in the past” (Potter 1994:35), that every event and decision made which crystallized together into every present moment occurred at the expense of something else. To make such claims, and to give sufficient substance to such claims, would be to break down ideology’s reliance upon the appearance of naturalness and inevitability. This knowledge and consequent action would, theoretically, not only shed light on the atrocities of the past, but would allow for a reexamination of the state of society in the present as it developed through the evolution and transformations of ideologies over time. With such an approach, the quest for the relevance of archaeology in the grand scheme of society would be no mystery; it would be inherent in its practice.

But how does one go about critiquing ideology? What ought the historical materialist look out for? Potter, and many critical thinkers across countless disciplines, have recognized the need for some kind of standard of judgement to provide a loose framework for these kinds of endeavors. I too have located the need for a standard of judgement to provide guidance for this project, and I have found my answer within the pages of Potter’s book. I do not wish to be dogmatic in my examination of the practices of The Annapolis School of Archaeology. It is tempting to begin with my own understandings of today’s varying forms of social inequality, and
to directly apply those understandings to the recorded practices of those participating in this emerging school of thought. Although my personal opinions may very well have some weight to them (or so I like to think), the outcomes of such an approach would likely do little good in paving the way for the future of critical archaeology, a task I believe to be advantageous for the realm of archaeology as a whole. It is in my support of the main tenets and aims of critical archaeology, as they have been outlined by the practitioners themselves, that I have decided to take up this exploration using a piece of the critical theory that has been employed by the very people I wish to review. This framework, known as *immanent critique*, has been described by critical archaeologist Parker B. Potter, Jr. as a “theoretically acceptable way of dealing with the idea of truth… [and] as a method for critical research” (Potter 1994:36). While numerous philosophers throughout the duration of history have worked with dialectics and varying critiques of reason, thus complicating the true source of this particular method, I will base my analysis on the theories of two foundational members of The Frankfurt School: Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno.

Horkheimer’s work on critical theory is born out of the concern with “the hiatus between concept and object, word and thing” (Held 1980:182), a problem philosophy has sought to address for quite some time. Horkheimer lays the groundwork for a solution to this question through a brief history of philosophy’s attempts to *define* the relationship between “nature” and “spirit”. He suggests that any move to define either or both of these concepts is to automatically “pose either their dualism or their unity, and to pose the one or the other as an ultimate” (Horkheimer 1947:169). For Horkheimer, uniting nature and spirit, regardless of which concept a given theory lends primacy to, is to take an intellectually devoid shortcut that ignores
“the potentialities and tendencies inherent in it… [and] serves to intrench the idea of man’s domination of nature” (Horkheimer 1947:169). To insist on a rigid duality is also insufficient on the grounds that it it fails to see said duality as a product, thus extracting the two concepts from the process through which they are obtained (Horkheimer 1947:171). This process, according to Horkheimer, renders “philosophical concepts…inadequate, empty, [and] false” (Horkheimer 1947:171). Ultimately, philosophical inquiry ought not to be about pitting two interrelated categories against one another (Horkheimer 1947:174), nor should it be about an attempt to define one concept or the other. Rather, “an adequate description, unfolding the meaning of any of these concepts, with all its shades and its interconnections with other concepts” (Horkheimer 1947:166) should be the goal.

Horkheimer’s discussion of nature and spirit serves as a warning to readers and thinkers who wish to go about finding the true conditions of a particular idea. In the context of capitalism, there often tends to be a gap between ideas and reality, and critical theory seeks to to gain an understanding of that gap in order to insight progression. As illustrated with the example mentioned above, there is the fear of falling into the realm of irrelevance or emptiness as a result of neglecting or misunderstanding the historical processes that give way to the concepts theorists aim to understand. Horkheimer suggests a new method of inquiry to bridge this gap, one that “confronts the existent, in its historical context, with the claim of its conceptual principles, in order to criticize the relation between the two and thus transcend them” (Horkheimer 1947:182). In order to exemplify this method, Horkheimer turns to a critique of the bourgeois social order (the object). He begins his critique by identifying the core conceptual beliefs of the bourgeois social order, as well as a description of how it planned to implement these beliefs (the concepts).
In looking at the object as it develops through time, it became immediately apparent that the concepts transformed into their opposites (Held 1980:184). Unlike the attempts to understand nature and spirit, this procedure occurs organically in that it reveals “its own inherent negativity [because] its development contradicts its own claims about itself and about what is possible” (Held 1980:184). Horkheimer argues that the validity of this conception of social theory can be proven even further through applying this same form of analysis to social institutions, for “if subjected to such an analysis, the social agencies most representative of the present pattern of society will disclose a pervasive discrepancy between what they actually are and the values they accept” (Horkheimer 1989:262).

Instead of attempting to prescribe my vision of the future possibilities of Archaeology in Annapolis, I intend to delve into what has already occurred through examining and building upon Mark Leone’s 1984 interpretation of the William Paca Garden, a case study that is widely referenced in the educational institutions which train up and coming archaeologists. As I move through the next two portions of this project, I will keep in mind the guidelines which have been explained above in order to evaluate the extent to which Leone was able, or unable, to provide space for insight into the inner workings of ideology in 18th century Annapolis. In locating any possible contradictions between the enactment of this interpretation and the theoretical guidelines Archaeology in Annapolis operates with, I hope to provide pieces of my own insight I find to be lacking in Leone’s original work in order to contribute to the broader goals of this critical archaeology and critical approaches to historical inquiry as a whole.
Chapter 2: On Gardens

William Paca was born into a relatively well-off family of planters in Baltimore, Maryland in October of 1740. After receiving a primary education and a bachelor of arts degree at The Academy and College of Philadelphia, he went on to study law, eventually becoming successful enough to establish his own practice for the people of Annapolis. In May of 1763, Paca was married to Mary Chew, the daughter of another prominent Maryland planter, and it was through their marriage that he came into the sizable sums of money which allowed him to build his extravagant home and garden on Prince George Street shortly thereafter. After the construction of his property, Paca’s legal and political career boomed. In 1771, he was elected to the Maryland legislature, and in 1774 he was selected to be a member of the Continental Congress, which he served on until 1779. In 1782, Paca was elected to be the governor of Maryland, and in 1790 he was chosen to hold a seat on the United States District Court for the District of Maryland. Throughout his young adult life and the earlier portions of his career, Paca maintained a reputation as a fierce and outspoken anti-Federalist and Patriot. Paca, along with other local resisters, led a series of movements against sanctions imposed on the colonies by the British, and went on to establish a local chapter of the Sons of Liberty in Anne Arundel County.

Perhaps the most notable aspect of his career, and arguably his life, was his position as one of the four Maryland signers of the United States Declaration of Independence. When it came to the matter of independence from the crown, Paca was well known for his dedication to liberty and equality, wanting strongly to rid the former colonies of the looming power which greatly restricted their freedom in all realms of their lives. Yet Paca himself, like many of the other dedicated Patriots and signers of the Declaration, was responsible for enslaving over one
hundred African and African American persons. It has been estimated that he owned 8-10 house servants (a combination of indentured servants, enslaved people, and bought convicts) at any given time in his home in downtown Annapolis. When he lived on Wye Island, the estate he moved to after having sold his home downtown, he would have had closer to one hundred servants, convicts, and enslaved persons alike, as the property was significantly larger than his downtown home. William Paca may have had a hand in freeing The United States from the rule of the British, but he was also responsible for the buying, selling, and owning of hundreds of other human beings.

William Paca’s Annapolis home was built sometime between 1763 and 1765, and was designed largely by Paca himself, as there were no architectural specialists in Annapolis at the time (Sarudy 1998:80). He would have been left to consult the owners of other local Georgian homes as well as home design manuals, whose popularity were on the rise due to a general increase in the production and accessibility of commodities. The home is a grand, five-piece Georgian mansion “with a two and a half storey central block separated by hyphens from one and a half storey dependencies on either side” (Leone 1984:29). Like many other Georgian mansions of the time, both its floor plan and exterior are bilaterally symmetrical, though if cut in half the two sides would not be perfect images of one another. Historians working at the home have attributed this to the fact that Paca, and not an architectural specialist, designed his home. Paca may have wanted to make a certain room be a certain shape, or give himself more floorspace in one room as opposed to another. This imperfect symmetry may also be seen in the garden (see Fig. 1), as well.
It should be noted that the garden which currently stands now is a partially informed reconstruction of what it once may have looked like. I will return to the reconstruction process shortly, as a physical description of the present garden is a requirement of such a discussion. The garden takes up a 2 acre piece of land, and slopes down from the back of the home “in a series of terraces, known as a Chesapeake falling garden” (Historic Annapolis 2015:2). Like Paca’s home, he designed his home in line with Georgian style. It utilizes symmetry and order, achieved through an employment of geometric law and botanical knowledge, to create an extravagant,
organized, and controlled landscape. The first three terraces, deemed the upper portion of the
garden, feature a series of symmetrical garden rooms each containing a parterre, whereas the
bottom two terraces constitute the wilderness garden, which displays its flora in a far more fluid
fashion. The first terrace, now laid in red brick, begins where the home ends, and is separated
from the descent of the second terrace with a “boxwood hedge [that] creates a living
balustrade” (Historic Annapolis 2015:7). The upper portions of the garden are bisected with a
long, pea gravel path which is interrupted by three sets of limestone steps at each point of
transition between two terraces (Historic Annapolis 2015:2). Interestingly, the bisecting path
does not line up with the bisection of the home, but is instead situated slightly off to the left (if
one were to be facing the back of the home), closer to a side back entrance. Today, this terrace is
often used for events by Historic Annapolis, and is available to be rented out for personal affairs
such as weddings and other social events.

The second terrace is the first which features two of the four total garden rooms, with one
on each side of the center path. Another pea gravel path intersects the primary one
perpendicularly, allowing visitors entrance into the rooms sectioned off with tall hedges of wax
myrtle. On the left/west side of the second terrace is the room which contains the Rose Parterre.
This room features and intricate geometric design comprised of assorted rose bushes and a few
other kinds of perennial flowers (Historic Annapolis 2015:1998). Historic Annapolis’ detailed
garden guide explains that the roses currently featured in this portion of the garden may not be
entirely historically accurate, since the kinds of roses that would have been around during Paca’s
time would have only bloomed for a few weeks in May (Historic Annapolis 2015:9). HA have
also expressed a desire to display a wider variety of the genus. Opposite this room on the right/
east of the second terrace is another room, containing what is known as the Flower Parterre. Historic Annapolis has used this room to display “plants known and cultivated in Paca’s time, as revealed in the letters and garden purchases of Annapolitians in the late eighteenth century” (Historic Annapolis 2015:10), however they were unable to find any sources providing insight into what plants and flowers were actually in William Paca’s original garden. The flower beds in this garden are arranged in the shape of a Union Jack, “with eight triangular beds around a center” (Historic Annapolis 2015:10). Nothing I was able to find in my visits to the site explained this somewhat odd decision to display a piece of the British flag in the garden of a dedicated and outspoken Patriot. On the very far east side of this terrace, bumping up against the brick walls which mark off the limits of the garden, are the Kitchen and Physic Gardens, which feature of host of medicinal and edible plants which the Paca family may have grown during their time at the house (Historic Annapolis 2015:11).

The third terrace is laid out in the same way as the second, though its two garden rooms feature different parterres. The left/west side of this terrace is home to the Boxwood Parterre, which displays “English, American, and hybrid Korean specimens of boxwood outlining lozenge-shaped beds” (Historic Annapolis 2015:12). Across from this room is the Holly Parterre, which contains five, looming holly trees shaved into conical shapes that are arranged in a medieval garden pattern known as a quincunx (Historic Annapolis 2015:12). Each corner in this room is home to an American holly, with a taller, regal holly named after the one and only Governor William Paca situated in the center of the room in a star-shaped bed (Historic Annapolis 2015:12). On the far east side of this terrace, under the Kitchen Garden, is the orchard, in which a series of fruits that were known to have been grown in the 18th century still grow
today. Historic Annapolis uses the fruits grown in the orchard to make jams, jellies, and other assorted fruit products that could have been found in 18th century homes in Annapolis, and sell them to the public in their museum store.

The set of steps which follow the second terrace mark the end of the intricately and formally organized upper portion of the garden, and serve as the descent into the lower, wild area of the garden. Unlike the upper parts of the garden, the plant beds in the wilderness garden are not rectangularly organized but laid out in a curvilinear style, and the straight, rigid, and starkly tan path which guides guests through the garden rooms disappears into a soft, grassy lawn with a hardly noticeable dirt path which winds through the area (Historic Annapolis 2015:13). There is a small fall between the third terrace and the bottom portion of the garden which features an assortment of plants known to have been popular in many 18th century gardens along the East coast (Historic Annapolis 2015:13). This fall and the lower portion of the garden are distinctly separated by a canal that runs horizontally in a rigidly straight line. This canal, unearthed by archaeologists, provided water from a natural spring to various parts of Paca’s home. A small wooden foot bridge carries guests over the canal and towards the pond, which was jestingly designed to resemble the shape of a fish. In Paca’s time, the pond would have served as a temporary home for some of the fish that would later make it to his dining room table (Historic Annapolis 2015:13). In contrast to the bisectional path in the upper terraces, the path in the lower portion of the garden veers off to guide visitors over the pond. The bridge which crosses it “is decorated with Chinese fretwork in the same style as the interior woodwork in the house” (Historic Annapolis 2015:13). At the very back of the garden, beyond the pond and in line with the path of the upper section of the backyard property, is the focal point of the garden: a
two-story, gleamingly white summer house topped with a statue of the Greek god Mercury. While the summerhouse may have been a pleasant place to entertain, historians suppose that Mr. Paca may have used it as a meeting place to discuss plans of revolution prior to the signing of the Declaration of Independence. In the right back corner is a small brick bathhouse and a beehive, in the left back corner is a canal house (Historic Annapolis 2015:14).

As I mentioned above, the present-day garden is only a partially informed reconstruction of what the garden may have looked like during William Paca’s time at the house. As the property was passed from owner to owner, the garden fell into disarray and was eventually destroyed. Paca sold the home in 1780, when he and his wife moved to their larger home on Wye Island on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. While the home did still serve as a private residency, and sometimes a rental property, less care was taken in the maintenance of its grounds. In 1866, one owner, a woman named Catharine Ray, reported that she wish she was able to take better care of the garden but was unable to afford a gardener who could do so to an acceptable degree (Historic Annapolis 2015:3). A few years later, the garden served a source of produce for the recently established United States Naval Academy, whose grounds are only a few blocks away from the Paca property. Between the mid-19th century and the beginning of the 20th, when the property was bought up and turned into a hotel, varying landscaping changes were made on the garden in order to accommodate the rapidly growing historic district of Annapolis. In 1901, the property was turned into Carvel Hall, a 200-room hotel whose parking lot and associated buildings destroyed much of what was left of Paca’s prized garden (Historic Annapolis 2015:3). By the time both the house and the garden were purchased by the Historic Annapolis Foundation in the mid-1960’s, the garden was nothing more than the remnants of a dead business’ parking lot.
Hoping to utilize the property as a place of education on Annapolitian and American history, Historic Annapolis realized there was an immense amount of work to be done in order to bring the property back to its original glory. Archaeologists, architects, preservationists, and horticulturalists were called in immediately to take up the task. Although there is much to be said about the restoration of the entire property, it is the restoration of the garden that is of interest for the purposes of this project. The first excursion into the garden was done by archaeologist Stanley South in 1967, though his focus was primarily on portions of the house and areas just outside of the structure (see South 1968). The vast majority of the garden’s excavations were conducted by Bruce Powell (1966), Glenn Little (1967), Kenneth and Ronald Orr (1975), Ann Yentsch (1983), and Laura Galke (1990). Those involved with the reconstruction had two pieces of artwork they were able to refer to during the nearly decade long process. The first, a 1772 painting by Charles Willson Peale (see Fig. 2), is a life size painting of Mr. Paca himself. In the background one can see “a brick wall with narrow vertical openings, an ornamental summer house on a rise, and a bridge decorated with Chinese fretwork spanning a small pond” (Historic Annapolis 2015:4). The second piece, an 1884 sepia wash drawing by Maryland artist Frank B. Mayer (see Fig. 3), depicts the back of the home from where the present day vegetable garden is (South 1968:25). Although the focus is primarily on the home itself, the drawing also features the first two terraces, the path, and the stairs which connect them. A small portion of the wall is also visible in the drawing. Although the accuracy of these depictions were at first uncertain, the existence of the garden features they displayed were confirmed in archaeological evidence.
Figure 1. Charles Willson Peale's 1772 painting of William Paca. The summerhouse, pond, and small portion of the bridge may be seen in the righthand side of the painting. Peale was born in Maryland and eventually settled in Annapolis. In addition to being a painter, Peale was also a known member of the Sons of Liberty. Photo courtesy of the Maryland State Art Collection.
Due to all of the construction work the property endured during the construction of Carvel Hall, much of the archaeological evidence of Paca’s original garden was destroyed. In 1967, archaeologist Glenn Little confirmed that this portion of the garden would likely contain little valuable archaeological information, if any at all (Historic Annapolis 2015:5), and Historic Annapolis then had had to turn to old garden guides and the patterns of other gardens belonging to people of similar standing in the area (Historic Annapolis 2015:5) in order to reconstruct it to the best of their abilities. The bottom portion of the garden, however, was covered with roughly twelve feet of fill in order to make it level with the rest of the property to create the hotel’s
parking lot, which preserved evidence of “the summer house, the bridge, section of the original brick wall foundation, and remains of a drainage canal” (Historic Annapolis 2015:4-5), confirming much of what was depicted in the two pieces of artwork that featured the property. Later excavations yielded evidence of the pond’s original location, the spring house, more portions of the wall, and more of the canal. Stanley South’s report of the excavations he performed show that much of the artifacts unearthed date back to shortly after Paca sold his home (South 1967), and I was unable to locate the original excavation reports of those who later ventured out further into the garden. All in all, archaeological endeavors, paired the two aforementioned pieces of artwork, were able to confirm the existence of the terraces, the outer wall, the bridge, the pond, the summer house, the canal, and the spring house.

The Georgian order was first noted in Maryland at the beginning of the 17th century, however found its first spurt of popularity in the 1720’s when contractual community relations and the resulting ownership of labor had not yet been solidified in the colony (Matthews 2010:82). The sheer size and extravagance of Georgian style homes, in addition to their new architectural techniques and building materials which allowed the homes to withstand time far longer than their predecessors, provided wealthy landowners with the opportunity to form temporary contracts with builders to aid in the lengthy and complicated construction process. It was during this time that many Georgian home and garden design handbooks, such as New Principles of Gardening by Betty Langely, were produced and imported from England, providing style guides to architectural specialists and novice designers alike. As the decades passed, contract based work became commonplace between workers and clients, and the style’s original purposes became reified into colonial society, and the style became less prominent. This time
period also saw a significant realignment of wealth, and by the 1770's “the top twenty percent of the population owned eight-seven percent of assets recorded at death” (Matthews 2010:82). The early 1760’s, however, proved to be a challenge to the legitimacy of the economic systems, based in the accumulation of profit, which were growing and developing in the colonies. In 1763, at the end of The Seven Years’ War, the English crown began heavily imposing taxes “aimed at making colonists pay for their…[various] imperial services” (Matthews 2010:83). This period in American history was a time of great uncertainty: the English Crown’s grip on laws and lifestyles in the colonies was growing tighter and tighter by the day, and the public’s opinion on how to proceed was dangerously divided. Tensions were further aggravated when it came to the matter of slavery and indentured servitude, as many of those vocally fighting for American independence and freedom hypocritically partook in these violent institutions, which certainly did not go unnoticed by those whose lives were robbed by them. During this time, the Georgian order reemerged in Annapolis, spearheaded by members of the gentry class trying desperately to create a stabilized society and economy to their own benefit, and free of English rule.

Although interpretations of specific Georgian sites may vary, it is generally accepted by art historians and archaeologists alike (Deetz 1977, Leone 1984, Rhys Isaac 1999, Matthews 2010) that the Georgian order was “organized around the bilateral symmetry or the segmentary dividing of life, its functions and things, into parts arrayed into a hierarchy of isolated elements” (Leone 1984:26). What was particularly remarkable about this new style in comparison to those which came before it was its drastic effect on “the relationship among the individual, his family, his house, and his community” (Deetz 1977:115). Everything about the style, from doors to windows to rooms and gardens, became highly segmented and carefully
ordered with each piece of the design having its own designated purpose. Where colonial homes and gardens once gave off a more communal and disordered sense, the structure of Georgian design emphasized “the individual [as] the basis for a new ideology of the natural human experience” (Matthews 2010:57). The symmetry and segmentation found in the architecture mirrored and reproduced the way people interacted with one another as well, as can be seen in the change in dining habits. Where people once shared cups and dishes with one another at meals, Georgian etiquette dictated that each person who was to dine at a table should have their own individual place setting, suggesting that while a person was still a part of a collective (the table), they still maintained their own individual identity within it (Matthews 2010:76-77). While most historians do not attribute the structures and material practices themselves as the direct source of this new individualized lifestyle, the physical attributes of these features created a landscape which fostered the rise of a reimagining of the importance and place of the individual in nature and in society, particularly as members of the emerging capitalist labor force.

The style emerged in tandem with the development of enlightenment natural philosophy (science) and mathematics, and the “calculable, coherent, and observable laws relevant to both the physical world and social life” (Matthews 2010:58) that became available were integrated into Georgian architecture and etiquette. The mathematical and scientific foundations of this style were in part a physical manifestation of humanity’s move to distance itself from nature in order to become masters of it. This premise was commonly manifest through the utilization of the laws of optics, which allowed designers to manipulate the appearance of size, depth, and distance regardless of the amount of physical space actually available to them. In Georgian house plans, spatial dimensions would be reduced to numbers “that define the size and arrangement of
rooms and elevations” (Matthews 2010:80), which would allow designers and builders to carefully craft ratios that could be applied to “create perfect forms in actual buildings of any dimensions” (Matthews 2010:80). When one of these ratios, commonly the Pythagorean 3-4-5 ratio, was worked into the façade of a home, a designer could create the illusion that a house was larger than it actually was by making each section proportionally smaller to the one below it (Matthews 2010:80). In keeping with the style of the day, the 2-acre Paca garden implemented the illusory laws of optics in order “to create a different distance from what actually [existed] between viewer and object” (Leone 1984:31). This effect was achieved with the terraces that descend incrementally towards the summer house, which serves as the garden’s focal point. The boxed off rooms which line the upper portion of the garden act as the edge of the viewer’s sight, guiding their vision directly toward the designated point of interest (Leone 1984:30-31). By placing the summer home at the end of the three-dimensional space the terraces created, and by placing it in the center of the line of site created by the hedges, the summer home appeared to be farther away than it actually was.

The wealthy, white, male landowners who were largely responsible for the appearance of Georgian style in Annapolis were able to put their vast knowledge of math and science on display through designing and living in these structures as well as partaking in strictly regulated Georgian etiquette amongst their peers. Like William Paca, many of the individuals who implemented Georgian style held a personal stake in the political and economic climate of the day, and were all too aware of how uncertain the future of their land and lives were. Their ability to create physical illusions in their homes and gardens through the use of mathematics made it seem as though they had a command over nature and their environments. The individualized
social order that developed with and was reaffirmed by these structures (Matthews 2010:58) also took on the appearance of being natural, since the social rules and regulations were so closely associated with the style’s physical counterparts. If lawyers, politicians, and other members of the planter-gentry class appeared to have the highest understanding of how to manipulate their physical environment, then it would appear that they were best suited to be in a position of power. Indeed, quite a few of the great Georgian homes and gardens built in Annapolis around this time (the Chase-Lloyd, Hammond-Harwood, Brice, and Paca properties) were commissioned or purchased by prominent Maryland planters and legal or political figures, many of whom William Paca would have interacted with on a regular basis.

According to Mark P. Leone’s 1984 interpretation of the William Paca Garden, when these social and physical laws appeared to be pulled directly from nature they take on an unquestionable and inevitable appearance, thus further disguising their place as ideological institutions. He argues that the naturalization of this new ideology was especially apparent in the application of optics and precedent of Georgian style gardens, where “segmentation quickly became confused with nature itself” (Leone 1984:26). The concept of precedence is the segmented view of the past which underlies the equally partitioned body of knowledge of the present, causing knowledge to not only appear rooted in nature but in history as well. In following the increasingly popular empiricist methods of inquiry, homeowners and scientists alike began to observe nature—from wind patterns, to plant life cycles, to the movement and alignment of the cosmos—in order to create an established body of knowledge which would ideally flow from the past to the present, “thus making the two seem continuous” (Leone 1984:27). This practice was also developed in the field of law; early American politicians and
lawyers, such as William Paca, made a point to be incredibly well versed in English law (some even received their legal training in England) so as to cite it when their legitimacy as potential government officials in the colonies fell into question (Leone 1984:28). It then follows that the if the data collected, both scientific and legal, flowed continuously from past to present then the same date could be implemented in order to calculate future outcomes, providing humanity with ability to knowledgeably anticipate what was to come. The production of congruent results from present to future further masked this ideology as natural, and made those who were able to understand and manipulate it appear even more powerful.

In following this mode of thought, one directly informed by Althusser’s conception of dominant ideology and the way it functioned in society, Leone argues that William Paca’s garden served to legitimize his position of relative power in Annapolitian society in two ways. Firstly as a figure of political and legal dissent in the face of the domineering English Crown: his knowledge and command of natural and legal precedent qualified him as an authority on the matter of American independence and what was to come after. Secondly, and more importantly to the purposes of this thesis, Leone argues that Paca’s employment of natural law and precedent served to conceal the major contradiction evident in William Paca’s life and in the struggle for American independence at large: “the promotion of personal freedom and individual liberty… [put forth by] a slave-holding society” (Leone 1984:33). In walking through his meticulously crafted garden, one would theoretically be in awe of his skillful mastery over nature: the beautifully segmented garden rooms, the artfully executed integration of antiquity apparent in Mercury’s guardianship over the property, and the mysterious juxtaposition of order and disorder viscerally felt through the descent down the terraces and into the wilderness. The wilderness,
which appeared to have a random and unpredictable flow, was in actuality designed with curvilinear geometry, which Leone suggests “[serves] as an index to greater mystification of the roots of nature” in its illusory depiction of “flow and movement [that] is in fact the rigid control over spontaneous movement” (Leone 1984:34). Leone concludes that it is the masking of the constructed nature of the social order as something seemingly timeless and natural that constitutes the Georgian order as an ideological system of control which emerged as an attempt to regain and assert control in a society which was on the cusp of revolution.

Leone’s interpretation of the garden was met with resistance from much of the archaeological community, from both Marxian and non-Marxian archaeologists alike. Both criticize him for failing to incorporate any notions of subjectivity into his analysis of the site (De Cunzo and Ernststein 2006:260), which is apparent in his assumptions that the ideological functions he identified in Paca’s garden would be received or felt in the same way by anyone and everyone who walked down its path and through its rooms. The authors of the 1996 piece, “Artifacts and Active Voices: Material Culture as Social Discourse” also assume this stance, pointing out that Leone’s decision to discuss the garden only from the perspective of Paca blatantly ignored the position of “the ruled”, who may have understood the garden to have partially or entirely different symbolic functions than what Paca or the rest of the planter-gentry class may have derived from the garden (Beaudry et al. 2006:278-9). They argue that this move consequently denies the existence of working class or subaltern cultures and the possible roles they could play in the social process from subverting to influencing the dominant class’ ideologies or cultures (Beaudry et al. 2006:286). In their chapter which critiques Marxist archaeology as a whole, Ian Hodder and Scott Huston point out that Leone’s discussion of
ideology lacked a specific, local and historical contextualization of how the garden was used, who would have used it, and how their personal preconceived notions of gardening may have influenced their perception of Paca’s floral assertions (Hodder and Huston 2003:86).

The matter of subjectivity and prior lived experience is briefly addressed in Christopher Matthew’s 2010 reevaluation of the Georgian order in colonial America, which is primarily conceived of through the lens of Georgian architecture and style in the late 18th century in Annapolis. He argues that the garden was not in fact meant to place Paca hierarchically above his visitors, but instead served to put them on the same plane “where they could experience the illusions and the theory of nature they revealed” (Matthews 2010:83). In viewing the use of optics employed by Paca in his garden, visitors would be able to take in the mathematical laws and precedents which were supposedly inherent within reality, and turn that knowledge into something they then owned (Matthews 2010:83) and could enact themselves. This is based on individuality, as the grasp of nature is achieved through an individual’s sensual perceptions as these coincide with their preconceived ideas of how nature functions. This becomes ideological insofar as people’s knowledge of nature is not something which is found inherently within nature, “but is rather cultural knowledge that describes natural processes, taken to be lessons on how persons fit into nature as individuals” (Matthews 2010:83). In other words, Paca’s mathematical understanding of the laws of nature is not something that is a part of nature as nature itself, but is imposed onto it by the dominant class of his time. In suggesting that they were a part of nature, and thus would be reflective of the way the social order should be, the garden becomes a manifestation, and reaffirmation, of ideology.
I would like to push Matthews’ conclusion a few steps further and think specifically about who would have spent time in William Paca’s garden, how they might have interacted with it, and how their experiences may have influenced their perceptions of the garden and its maker. Of course, there would be Paca and his family. As the lead designer, Paca’s knowledge of the mathematics operating within the garden would have been vast, and the opportunity to appreciate his own work and wealth likely would have been a highly enjoyable aspect of spending time in the garden. As an active participant in Georgian social lifestyle and a proponent of capitalism, consumerism, and slavery, it would not be stretch to assume that he believed both the laws of nature and the laws of the social order to be the way things were meant to be. There is perhaps something to be said about how Paca’s wife at the time, Mary Chew, would have perceived the garden and social order, as women of her time were not yet fully realized citizens (and arguably are not yet in the present day), however to explore such a topic would constitute an entire thesis on its own. Taking into account her social status as a member of the planter-gentry class and thus also a participant in Georgian etiquette, I will assume that her conceptions of nature and the social order were likely similar to that of her husband’s. Friends of the Paca family, such as Samuel Chase, fellow Declaration signer and commissioner of one of the other grand Georgian homes (which he sold before its completion), would have been of a similar social order and, like Chase, even owners of similarly styled homes themselves. I would imagine their views of the garden would be similar, perhaps even seeing it as a place to derive knew knowledge about geometry and horticulture to take home to their own spaces.

William Paca reportedly spent much time at work and away from Maryland, meeting with other chapters of the Sons of Liberty, thus leaving little time for him to tend to his garden on
his own. Furthermore, a man of his status would want to have others work on his garden as an additional display of his wealth and prowess. Paca is known to have enlisted once indentured servant to help him design his garden (Sarudy 1998:80), but any additional records on his life and domestic activities are scarce, as most of his personal files were destroyed in a fire at his later home on Wye Island. However it is generally known that prior to the American Revolution most wealthy landowners in the Chesapeake region were known to have had indentured servants, convicts, and/or enslaved African or African American persons see to their gardens (Sarudy 1998:78), since the private gardening industry had yet to take off. The indentured servants and convicts of the Chesapeake who were recorded to have worked on gardens during this time were from Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and England; there are minimal to no records containing the specificities of enslaved persons forced to work in gardens (Sarudy 1998:80). By the latter end of the 18th century, during the time Paca was inhabiting his home in downtown Annapolis, industry and manufacturing had grown substantially, and many white convicts and indentured servants were employed in other trades, taking them away from their previous garden work (Sarudy 1998:81). The place of European convicts and indentured servants would certainly be an interesting topic to explore, as they occupy a complex space between immersion in a European-influenced society yet having incredibly limited access to the amenities of the wealthy. Before I proceed, it should be acknowledged that this perspective is of the utmost importance to unpacking how Georgian style and its ideological forces influenced Annapolis in the latter half of the 18th century, as indentured servitude and convict labor were popular practices in Maryland during this time. However, the remainder of this chapter and the entirety of the next will focus on
some of the possible ways the subjective experiences of enslaved individuals could complicate Leone’s 1984 interpretation of the ideological functions of the William Paca garden.

Paca and the enslaved Black individuals he held captive in his home did in fact occupy the same physical landscape whose primary construction was a product of Enlightenment sentiment. They lived in the same structure: Paca and his family inhabiting the front and upper portions of the house, and the enslaved people moving through hidden stair cases, back hallways, and the slave quarters tucked away and out of sight. They also walked through the same garden: the Paca family holding meetings and parties, and the enslaved persons keeping it visually up to snuff so as to continually impress the Paca family’s guests. But do two groups of people, the oppressor and the oppressed, move through these landscapes in the same way? Do the symbols the gentry class imbued with a mathematically rational aesthetic register the same way for persons from every background, including people violently wrenched away from their home countries, from their families, from their very autonomy as human beings? The Paca house itself has been minimally excavated, and much of the garden area deposits have been destroyed during prior construction, but other sites in the area may be of use in answering these questions. Archaeological evidence unearthed in other nearby Georgian homes and gardens in addition to a series of writings about African and African American resistance suggest that the enslaved and free Black populations of Maryland, estimated to be around 40% of population in 1755 (Faragher 1990:257), may have made use of Annapolis’ meticulously planned out landscape in ways unknown to and misunderstood by the gentry class. I will argue that these hidden landscapes and the reasons which guided their formation pose a challenge to the Enlightenment reason which
guides both the construction of the Georgian order as well as the social structure of modern society.
Chapter 3: On Nature & Magic

Much has been discovered in Annapolis since Mark Leone wrote his interpretation of the Paca garden in 1984. Beginning in the early 1990’s, Archaeology in Annapolis shifted its focus to identifying, excavating, and interpreting sites known to have been inhabited by Africans and African Americans primarily in the 18th and 19th centuries. The results of these multi-year endeavors have provided archaeologists and folklorists with numerous material points of entry into understanding aspects of racial relations in early Annapolitian society as well as providing insight into the formation of African American identities before, during, and after the birth of the United States of America. Of particular interest to this project are the excavations of The Carroll House, The Brice House, The Slayton House, Wye House, and Fleet Street, which all yielded evidence of varying forms of Hoodoo, a syncretic African American folk spirituality which developed within enslaved communities in the Eastern and Atlantic regions of North America (Fry and Leone 199:372).

**Hoodoo**

Hoodoo, often referred to as conjure or rootwork, is one of a number of magico-religious systems formed amongst Black enslaved communities in colonial North America. Practiced largely in the Atlantic and eastern regions of the United States (Fry and Leone 1999:372), hoodoo finds its origins in a handful of West African religions, Christianity and its associated folk magic, and in the religious practices of Native American groups. Broadly speaking, Hoodoo accepts the “belief in a High God or Supreme Being” and the existence of “secondary gods… spirits of ancestors, and in the ability of humans to control spirit forces” (Jones 2000:3). Like nearly all of its West African influences, Hoodoo is grounded in the perception of the universe
which understands that “everything in nature, including plants, animals, and inanimate objects…
[has] a spirit or soul or governing principle and a function in addition to a certain level of
spiritual power” (Hazzard-Donald 2013:24). Although this all encompassing power is believed to
have been given to the earth by God, the Christian God in many cases, the ethereal forces which
power the world come from material objects and spiritual beings (Chireau 2003:39). In Hoodoo
as in nearly all of its aforementioned influences, physical states of illness and many general
misfortunes are often, though not always, attributed to spiritual origins (Hazzard-Donald
2013:57). These spiritual disturbances which consequently throw the connected physical world
out of balance are spurred by “malicious human actions…destructive powers…witchcraft or the
evil thoughts of a mean spirited person (Chireau 2003:101); these sources could be located and
addressed by a visit to the conjuror or root doctor, whose knowledge of the spiritual web of the
world could provide herbal remedies to address illness or charms for protection against evil
magic.

One of the primary tools of the conjurer was the conjure bag, which is heavily influenced
by the Kongoese nkisi (plural: minkisi), basically understood as “a ritual object invested with
otherworldly power” which allowed it “to affect special spiritual and material functions in the
world” (Young 2007:110). The word nkisi is etymologically relates to quite a few other Central
African terms which translate roughly into ‘spirit’, which “captures an important feature of
minkisi, that they are local habitations and embodiments of personalities from the land of the
dead, through which the powers of such spirits are made available to the living” (MacGaffey
1988:190). These spirits have themselves no physical form, but can be brought into the realm of
the physically tangible most easily through purposefully selected containers and objects (Young
These items could come in many material forms ranging from bundles to statues embellished with nails, and can aid people in healing and protection. Like human beings (personalities as souls or spirits housed in a material form), a container free of its spiritual inhabitation takes on no extraordinary meaning (MacGaffey 1988:192), though the spirit which it captures continues to exist outside of it. The container, as both its entirety and its components, “is a metaphorical expression of the action to be expected of the spirit, which is itself invisible and formless until it has been ‘fixed’ (kumwa) in a particular body” (MacGaffrey 1988:191). This notion complicates the conception of a radical distance between persons and objects, since material objects could be animated and brought into the web of universal relation, giving them a life similar to that which animates humans. They are also metonymic, as can be exemplified through the representation of certain illness and intents in charms through material objects, such was placing a round stone in an nkisi aimed at healing tumors, or the head of a snake into one directed at “punishing evildoers” (Smith 1994:41)

*Minkisi* and conjure bags, are comprised of two primary parts: some kind of container and the collections of items placed inside of the container, acting as the “medicine” or charm. The contents of the container can be thought of in three different kinds of representations. The first consists of “grave dirt, kaolin or riverbed clay, or perhaps a funerary relic (for example, a bone) of an ancestor, priest, or witchcraft victim” (Smith 1994:40), which invites the spirit to enter into the container. The second is an assortment of items, such as stones or herbs, which provide instruction for the task the spirit is asked to fulfill (Smith 1994:40). Often times these herbs and objects themselves are considered to have their own, lower level spiritual power. Some reoccurring items that have been discovered and associated with conjure bags in North America
are beads, bones, buttons, crystals, nails, pins, pieces of ceramics, and coins (Fry and Leone 2001:146). The third component consists of something taken from the body or possessions of the person towards whom the charm is directed, providing the spirit with a link to that person to work through (Smith 1994:42), incorporating the client or victim into the material casing of the spirit and effectively putting parts of the spirit back into them through the spell.

**Archaeological Evidence**

Though they might not have been recognized as such at the time of their discovery, Hoodoo caches and their earlier prototypes have been found in numerous locations throughout the southern United States from North Carolina, to South Carolina, to Virginia. What is believed to have been a concealment was even discovered recently in Germantown, New York by Christopher Linder and a group of Bard students taking the spring archaeology course one year ago. Archaeological projects in Maryland have discovered a number of different caches on sites ranging from Annapolitian Georgian homes, to plantation greenhouses, to one cache discovered on the side of an old road. Archaeologists from Archaeology in Annapolis unearthed what they have determined to be three caches (Fry and Leone 2001:146) during excavations of the ground floor of the Charles Carroll House, an 18th century Georgian home with a garden quite comparable to William Paca’s. During the majority of the time Paca inhabited his home on Prince George St., the Carroll House was occupied by Charles Carroll of Carrollton, another one of the four signers of The Declaration of Independence from Maryland. Documentary research showed that eighteen enslaved people lived in Carroll’s home during this time (Jones 2002:2). In the northeastern corner of a room next to the kitchen, archaeologists found twelve crystals grouped together in an area roughly six inches in diameter. Found with the crystals was a small
black bead and a smooth black stone. The collection of items was discovered underneath a white English pearlware bowl which had been hand-painted with a blue star-like pattern. Two other crystals, along with a piece of an ivory ring and a bubble shell were found near a doorway in the same room. Based on other items found in the same layer, the artifacts were dated back to 1790-1820.

Excavations at The Brice House, another 18th century Georgian style brick house of the same style as the Paca’s, turned up more evidence of these hidden bundles. A small cache, including a piece of a carved tortoise shell, was discovered outside of the house a the base of a lightening rod (Leone et al. 2012:157). Archaeologists digging on the ground floor of the home found a substantial amount of items associated with deposited all throughout different rooms on the floor. In one room, a cache featured a vast collection of items known to have been used in minkisi, such as “beads, peach pits, pins, a medicine bottle with a stopper in place and a seed inside it, buttons…[and] three pieces of red cloth” (Leone 2005:216). In another nearby room were “two iron rings…along with buttons and pins” (Leone 2005:217). More items, such as remains of a porcelain doll, were discovered under a hearth on the same floor. Archaeologists working on the site realized that the placement of these caches may not have been unconnected, but rather that their positions turned the entire space itself into a cosmogram:

“The middle of the two rooms was the cosmogram’s center, located at the crossing of the east wing’s long and short axes, as marked by the openings through the two chimneys at either end and the outside door and the staircase at either end of the short axis. The floor, plus the flues, the outside door and the stair opposite, composed a large, three-dimensional environment both illustrating and enabling a life’s safe journey” (Leone 2005:218)
The locations of the concealments, in relation to the structure as well as each other, provided a kind of road map for spirits to move in and out of the house, as well as through its rooms. These particular deposits have been dated back to the 1880s to the 1920s (Leone 2005:217).

Caches from a similar time frame as the Brice House were also found at the Slayton House, an 18th century row house constructed but a few years prior to the American Revolution (Leone 2005:206). Unlike the Carroll, Brice, or Paca properties, this home’s plot of land was far more restricted, and featured smaller work yards behind the structure, connecting to the kitchen (Leone 2005:206). There were noticeable similarities between the seven caches found at this location, all in the basement workroom area, and the aforementioned concealments unearthed at the other houses in Annapolis. Underneath a kitchen hearth was another collection of the remains of a porcelain doll along with a ring and an assortment of pins and buttons. In the northeast corner of 20th century storeroom archaeologists found pins and a pierced Chinese coin. Another bottle, this one painted and filled with “solidified black material” was found in the northeastern corner of another room on the same floor. Other caches, located near thresholds and northeast corners, were also found containing more pins, pieces of glass, buttons, unidentifiable powdery white material, and sherds of painted ceramics (Leone 2005:207). The items in this collection were dated as early as 1828, and as late as the 1920s, based on the manufactured material both in and near the caches (Leone 2005:210).

Concealments and traces of African American herbal healing methods have been located in Maryland gardens as well within domestic structures. Archaeology in Annapolis excavated the grounds of the Wye House in Talbot County; another Georgian style structure featuring gardens and other green spaces. The home was built by Edward Lloyd IV in 1790, roughly two decades
after he purchased the Chase-Lloyd House in the now historic district of Annapolis. Wye House also happens to be where Frederick Douglass was held as a young child, and where he grew to understand the institution of slavery as he grew older (Leone and Pruitt 2015:103). The first of two concealments located on this site was discovered under the threshold of what was once the greenhouse’s living quarters and the second “was at the apex, or key stone, of the vault of the brick furnace that provided heat to the greenhouse” (Leone and Pruitt 2015:111). The concealment in the greenhouse was a Prehistoric pestle researches suggest was reused by African Americans living on the site, since the item had a distinguishable glint, which could have served as a connection to light and fire (Leone and Pruitt 2015:111). Both concealments date back to sometime between 1790-1840. In addition to excavation, Leone and his team of researchers conducted a pollen analysis of the plant remains of the 18th century deposits both within the greenhouse and in the area of the slave quarters. A heavy presence of healing herbs, like burdock, were detected in the areas surrounding the living quarters (Leone and Pruitt 2015:112), and decorative plants and healing herbs alike were found within the greenhouse (Leone and Pruitt 2015:111).

In 2008, Archaeology in Annapolis made what is believed to be an unprecedented discovery during excavations on Fleet Street, a road which runs incredibly close to the Maryland Statehouse and many of the houses I have mentioned throughout this project. A clay-encased bundle was found around four feet under the ground surface in what was determined to have once been a street gutter of a road built some three centuries ago (Leone 2008:1). The football-sized mass of clay and sand was x-rayed, and showed that it was in fact a container filled with “hundreds of pieces of lead shot, pins and nails…[and] a prehistoric stone axe [which] extends
upward from the top of the bundles” (Leone 2008:1). Based on its relation to datable pottery sherds, as well as information on the items contained within the bundle, Leone was able to date the cache to around 1700, give or take twenty years (Leone 2008:3). The dating and composition of the bundle has lead numerous experts on West African tradition to believe that the bundle was associated with an African-related religious tradition and not with the European and Native American influenced practice of hoodoo. This bundle, unlike the rest, was found in a place that would have been out in public for the world to see, resting on the side of a road in front of someone’s home. Although the reason for this seemingly unusual placement has not been discerned, researchers have come to believe through documentary and archaeological evidence that folk magic prior to the mid-18th century was more openly acceptable—a subject which I will soon address.

**Hidden Landscapes**

I would suggest that these differing views of nature may have caused people to interact with the Annapolitian landscape in ways which differed from the planter-gentry class who was largely responsible for constructing it. Although there is no data specific to Paca’s home and garden that I was able to discover, evidence unearthed at homes similar to his, even owned by friends of his, suggest that some of the enslaved and free Black residents in Maryland were making use of the Annapolitian landscape in ways unintended by and even imperceptible to those who planned it. This is not to say that the reasoning which guided Georgian style would be lost on enslaved persons, for they were the ones to tend to the Georgian gardens and may very well have held a good understanding of what was at work. Rather, a different kind of reason was inserted into the same physical landscape. Like the early Virginian architectural landscape
described by Dell Upton in his 1984 piece, “White and Black Landscapes in Eighteenth-Century Virginia”, the architectural style of pre-Revolutionary War Annapolis had elements and paths of movement built into its structures and landscapes (Upton 1984:71). The optical illusions and laws of perspective at play in Paca’s home and garden instructed the eye on where and how to move, attempting to morph the experience of the viewer into something analogous to Paca’s own experience of his property. The paths in the upper portions of the garden, which occurred in predictable and regimented frequencies, suggest to visitors which parts of the garden they should or should not enter, and in what order they ought to do so. The wilderness garden, seemingly unplanned and organic, also provided a guided optic experience crafted through curvilinear geometry, with its path and bridge dictating the visitor’s physical experience of the wild. The experience of Paca’s garden was wholly visual. However the placement of concealments under thresholds and chimneys in order to guide the direction of spirits suggest that there were different kinds of movement at play in these spaces, movements which could not be guided and viewed through the employment of mathematical law.

Alternative conceptions of gardens and gardening may also be noted in the yard-making practices of both historical and present-day African Americans, a practice which also found its origins in the beginning of slavery in the New World. Like Paca’s garden, these gardens were often meant for particular audiences, and both types of gardens shared some common audiences. Enslaved persons constructing these gardens did so for themselves, but also for “family members, neighbors, overseers, planters, and outsiders”, but unlike Paca’s garden, some of their audiences were unseen (Heath and Bennet 2000:38). These gardens, which do serve as places to grow crops and herbs, are often embellished with items such as mirrors, jars, statues, hubcaps,
herbs, and animal bones, among many more. These items are placed in particular places, such as near crops, doors, or more overgrown portions of the garden based upon their perceived symbolic importance, a decision largely left up to the individual yard-maker (Gundaker 1993:63). Many writers on Black folk art connect the ways these gardens are constructed back to the Kongo nkisi, arguing that the yards themselves serve as spells or charms of protection, with the items channeling certain spiritual forces in order to do so (Gundaker 1993:65). Yard-sweeping was often another primary component of these yards. Largely influenced by the Bakongo, the act of sweeping a yard was a way to rid a person’s landscape of “the ghosts of witches and others who have not been accepted to the villages of the dead” (Heath and Bennet 2000:43). While many of the decisions which go into the formation of a yard or garden are choices of aesthetic, such as cleanliness or vibrancy, many of these choices held spiritual dimensions, as well.

**Death in the Name of Nature**

It is important and relevant to note that Africans and African Americans were not alone in practicing spiritually charged folk magic in the colonies. Since the time when settlers first arrived on the shores of North America, people of European descent have been practicing magic in many ways similar to what I’ve explained above. These practices were largely influenced by pre-Christian religion and ritual, and in Maryland seem to have been tolerated alongside Christian religious belief. A deposit of what is believed to have been 17th century English charms, specifically witch bottles, which were believed to have been able to counteract spells or dark magic (King et al. 1996:28), was discovered at Patuxent Point, a town on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. The deposit featured pieces of bottle, including a bottle neck, two peculiar bones, and
a small collections of nails (King et al. 1996:28). Many writers have associated witch bottles with “manipulative magic that involves binding, cursing, and maleficum” (Manning 2012:342), which are said to be highly personal forms of magic. These bottles often functioned as countercharms to actively protect the user from specific “suspected witches, conjurers, and enemies”, and sometimes even served as a social mechanism which would address “discord among neighbors” (Manning 2012:343). 17th century European science also operated on what would now be considered magical properties such as alchemy, astrology, and certain kinds of herbal healing (Anderson 2007:54-55). Like the conjurors of Black communities, many southern white communities had resident “cunning” men or women who could draw upon their knowledge of the spiritual connection of the world to create charms and cast spells, usually of the benevolent nature (Anderson 2007:54). Archaeological and ethnohistorical evidence shows that European-influenced magic and ritual was practiced well into the 20th century, and is still being practiced in different forms today (Manning 2012:150).

I would argue that the multiple different kinds of landscapes were at play all throughout the colony of Maryland, many of which were imbued with an underlying spiritual sense. Though I cannot make a definitive statement on the subject, and would not do so even if I thought I was able, it would seem that European witchcraft and magic, and perhaps witchcraft and magic in general, were more openly acceptable prior to the middle of the 18th century. Leone et al. (2008) turned to earlier archives of The Maryland Gazette, founded in 1727, and note that entries prior to 1740 make numerous mentions of magical occurrences such as “many-headed monsters, witchcraft trials in Europe, misshapen babies linked to magic, unaccounted appearances and
disappearances and the world of pagan, non-Christian belief” (Leone 2008:5). I decided to do some of my own research and unpack this possibility even further.

Unlike the outbreaks of witchcraft accusations in New England, Maryland saw only nine witchcraft trials between 1634 and 1712 (Witkowski 2014:36), only one of which ended with an execution. Over half of these 9 trials consisted of civil cases regarding slander, and not the actual practice of dark magic itself. In the early 1630’s, the Maryland Assembly adopted England’s Witchcraft Act of 1604, which rendered witchcraft a felony circumstantially punishable by death. This move made witchcraft and magic the affairs of the law, and not of the church, as was the case during many of the thousands of witchcraft trials England saw through the centuries. Maryland’s one and only witchcraft-related execution began in 1684, when charges of witchcraft were brought against one Rebecca Fowler, described in her 1685 indictment as a “spinster” who “used her powers to do harm to the body of servant Francis Sandsbury” (Witkowski 2014:41). She was executed by hanging on the 10th of October 1685. In describing Fowler’s crimes, it was said that she was involved with “the malicious instigation of the devil”, a phrase that had been previously used to describe instances of assault, theft, and adultery (Witkowski 2014:42). Some historians believe that Fowler, whose husband died prior to her trial and execution, had been involved in some scandalous affairs, thus making her a prime target for accusations of social deviance, though it is difficult to say for certain. Years prior to Fowler’s case in 1674, an indentured servant by the name of John Cowman was convicted of enacting dark witchcraft upon a fellow indentured servant of his, and although he had been sentenced to death, The Maryland General Assembly opted to let him live so long as he “declared his indebtedness the Lower
House and the governor” while standing at the gallows with a noose around his neck (Witkowski 2014:37). He was consequently sentenced to service as a laborer.

The colonies were undergoing great amounts of change and tension throughout the general time frame in which accusations of witchcraft were widely seen. Where Maryland had once been a scattered collection of agricultural properties, it began to see the development of towns and ports, and the meticulously planned town of Annapolis was no exception. Wealth continued to accumulate in the hands of the already wealthy, and their plantation businesses boomed. In 1700, there were 25,000 recorded Black individuals inhabiting Maryland, and by 1755 that number jumped to 130,000, making Maryland’s Black community 40% of the colony’s entire population (Faragher 1990:257). Although the colony only saw one execution related to witchcraft, capital punishment for varying other crimes was not given out sparingly. Prior to 1738, criminal acts which warranted the death sentence were crimes such as murder, rape, burglary, storehouse robbery, and horse stealing (Hearn 2015:170). However, on the 7th of June in 1738, a new crime, one seemingly reserved exclusively for Black people, made its way onto the list of crimes punishable by death in Maryland. Distinct from murder, the criminal act of “poisoning” became an incredibly severe criminal offense in Maryland and in other colonies as well. There were four recorded cases of poisoning in the 1730’s and no more until 1755, when the colony appears to have experienced a sharp increase in occurrences of the crime. Between 1755 and 1767, Maryland executed thirteen Black individuals for having either successfully poisoned someone or for having been caught attempting or conspiring to do so (Hearn 2015:173-175). Though the literature on the subject is somewhat limited, it would seem that “poisoning” as a crime had less to do with its possible outcomes and far more to do with the
means of the crime. While a fair number of white slave owners and their families were actually poisoned throughout the New World, making death a very tangible fear for slave owners, many were concerned with other kinds of power African American herbal practitioners could wield. The accumulated successes of enslaved healers or conjurors could “serve to strengthen and validate not only the reputation and power of the slave priest-healer [but also] the complete storehouse of slave community folk knowledge” (Hazzard-Donald 2013:52).

By the early-to-mid 19th century, the crime appears to have disappeared from the state’s executional records altogether. Ironically and perhaps unsurprisingly, carefully monitored and regimented medical exchange was still going on between white Americans and Black Americans during the latter half of the 18th century. While certain acts of herbal or spiritual administration caused many Black Americans to be accused and executed for poisoning, others freed enslaved persons and entered into the realm of European medical and marketable knowledge. Sometime in the 1740’s, an enslaved man from South Carolina concocted an antidote, made primarily of plantain roots and horehound, to remedy varying poisons and rattlesnake bites. After agreeing to divulge the recipe for his antidote and allowing it to be rigorously tested, the Commons House of Assembly bought Caesar’s freedom and awarded him a yearly pension for the rest of his life (Klauber and Harvey 1982:204). Although the efficacy of his cure was and continues to be contested, its recipe was published throughout many almanacks in the colonies, including Jonas Green’s 1751 Maryland Almanack (Hayes 1996:91).

The archaeological and documentary evidence of folk magic found in Maryland suggest that a diverse range of its residents may have held views of nature which were, at least in part, incompatible with the Enlightenment conceptions of the natural world, which can be seen at
work in William Paca’s garden. The reason and rationality born out of the Enlightenment gave humanity the supposed ability to control matter “without the illusion of immanent powers or hidden properties” (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002:2). Instead, the control of matter was to occur through the expansion of knowledge, or facts accrued through the establishment of observation-based precedents. In an Enlightened world, the individual would be able to take control of this knowledge and use it at their own discretion as a way to navigate their relations to nature, society, and morality. For this to function successfully, nature had to be come *universally* disenchanted and objectified, which meant severing any spiritually symbiotic ties nature may have shared with people. To suggest that there would be something outside this worldview would be to undermine it, as the existence of an unseen force which could not be reasoned with would contest humanity’s potential to see the entirety of nature in its objectified form in order to assert dominance over it. In other words, the validity of Enlightenment’s conception of knowledge, nature, and humanity was contingent on being unchallenged, “Reason and Nature now had to be unified” (Tafuri 1976:8) at any cost. In this sense, Enlightenment was totalitarian.

The seemingly blasé denial of magic asserted by Enlightenment thinkers was thus a vital part of legitimizing reason. However this denial was not one that was outright, for many continued to believe that magic did exist, but not in the same way they once did. Rather, this denial was a framing of magic as a failed conceptual system of the past (Davies 1999:8). The advent of enlightened reason (with its social, moral, political, and economic dimensions) was thus made out to be a positive marker of the evolution of intellectual capacity on the linear timeline it named “progress”. With this in mind, anyone who still held any kind of worldview which incorporated magic would be perceived as backwards, uncultured, and more importantly
as a possible threat to the new system Enlightenment thinkers wished to implement. The
development of the crime “poisoning” seemed to have came about in tandem with the rise in
popularity of Enlightenment thought amongst the privileged classes. It also seems to have come
about when Maryland’s Black population was experiencing a rapid growth. Though proponents
of slavery already viewed Black persons as inferior or subhuman, I would like to suggest that the
presence of African American magico-religious practices provided them with even more reason
to do so. Those who practiced may have been viewed as unlearned and in need of incredibly
restrictive education and subjugation: the continuation of the institution of slavery. I also believe
that white slave owners, particularly those invested in these new educational pursuits, may have
seen the persistence of these practices as a threat both to their lives and to the social order, thus
requiring incredibly severe punishment, such as execution, to eradicate them.

I would argue that the presence of these landscapes would remain largely hidden to those
who did not either accept or understand this particular unity of the natural, the spiritual, and the
functional. However I believe that to address the hiddenness of these landscapes only in passing
would be to ignore the violence processes which forced them underground to begin with.
Enlightenment ideology did not come to the New World cleanly, and its employment in the
Annapolitan landscape was not innocent either. These new conceptions of objectified nature,
which can be seen ordering William Paca’s garden and the Georgian order in general, came about
through a violent, bloody suppression of anything which challenged them. However it was not
just the incompatible world views which suffered, but the people who held them as well. While
the archaeological evidence of folk magic indicates that it was practiced well into the 20th
century, and continues to be today, its narrative is one of a bloody war fought in the name of progress, and started in the name of fear.
Concluding Remarks

“A Klee painting named ‘Angelus Novus’ shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from the something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress”.
-Walter Benjamin in “Theses on the Philosophy of History”.

I do applaud Mark Leone and Archaeology in Annapolis for their recognition of a need to study history in a way which does not play into damaging, dominant ideologies. Many do not realize the ways in which linear, historicist narratives may not only damage the memories of those who have lived before us, but also the ways in which these narratives mask how our technologically advanced, highly reasonable society came to be in this world. However, I do not believe the task of examining history in a critical way is quite as easy as acknowledging ideology as a constructed phenomenon which served to mask quickly defined contradictions present in society. I feel as though this was the way Leone went about his interpretation of the William Paca garden, an interpretation which ultimately worked to preserve, instead of unmask, dominant ideologies brought about in the age of Enlightenment reason. While it seems that he stuck fairly closely to his dedication to antipositivism, I believe that the particular, self-reflection, and ultimately the integration of theory and practice may have been overlooked.

It is without a doubt that Leone’s interpretation of the Paca garden was geographically particular. He did not make any sweeping claims about the world, the country, or even the state. His analysis was concerned with one comparatively small locale: the city of Annapolis. But
could that particular locale not be broken down any further? William Paca was but one person who would have walked along the paths of that garden, and the ideological understandings Paca maintained about both the social and the natural world were but one perspective of life and order in 18th century Annapolis. Although this may be a jump, I personally feel confident in saying that the perspective of William Paca would not have seen the violence and bloodshed of his era as acts which were unjustified, as his own view of the world, the correct and proper view of the world, required these acts. Is it truly plausible to unmask ideology only from the perspective of those who employed it? Certainly ideology serves to mask contradiction, but what about the contradictions within the ideology itself? What, exactly, allowed for the acceptance and integration of these ideologies Leone was able to identify? There are likely an infinite number of answers to this question, and to piece them all together would be a huge undertaking that would likely not even be possible. However I believe that my analysis of Leone’s analysis offers a small opening for insight into the dialectical processes which gave way to the incorporation of Enlightenment frameworks into the founding of The United States of America.

I will admit that much of the archaeological evidence I have cited throughout this project was discovered after Leone wrote is interpretation of the garden, thus making a more localized incorporation of alternative views quite the challenge. However evidence detailing all kinds of world views held by people living in the colonies is available. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Annapolis was, and likely continues to be full of hidden landscapes. These landscapes are often invisible to those with no prior knowledge of them, as they operate through an intricate series of symbols and meanings which may be placed on things already imbued with other symbols and meanings. Our world, which is well into the later, decaying stages of reason has
taught us how to think. What we are able to see with our own two eyes, paired with our predetermined understandings of the object(s) of sight, is supposedly all that is there. The totalizing effects of Enlightened thought have become so intensely reified into modern thought processes that the possibility of alternatives, either past or present, is nothing more than a fleeting thought. To admit that one does not know what they are looking for as they set out to identify and understand landscapes is one thing: this can be addressed through a variety of means from documentary research, to oral records, to items found in the ground, just to name a few. But to not even recognize the mere possibility of physical landscapes charged with multiple meanings is another story; the very story which historicism loves to tell.

For the reasons which I have put forth in this paper, I believe that the theories of Archaeology in Annapolis have not carried over into its practices, at least in this particular instance. I would like to once again make it clear that I do not believe that this project has coalesced into the solution to end damaging methods of historical inquiry. I do not think that I should ever like to take on such a task, for to make such a claim would be to claim a total understanding of the world in its past, present, and future. Rather I see this project as an exercise in critical thought which I believe all researchers of history ought to take up. History is not just the study of the happenings of the past—it is also a study of how we study the past, and how our own biases and contexts may influence the ways in which past occurrences appear before our eyes. This does not mean, however, that the only historical writings one ought to study are the writings of others. Our own personal understandings of the past, whether written or not, can act as important passageways into how world views are developed and shaped over time.
I will conclude my project with this one last thought: the most important thing I have taken away from this entire process is the knowledge that I absolutely must revisit this project as my academic career continues to move forward.
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California, 1980.


