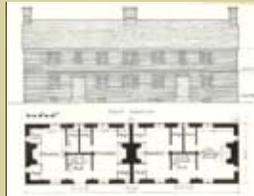
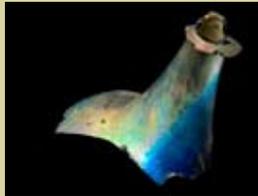


DIGGING VERITAS

The Archaeology and History of the Indian College and Student Life at Colonial Harvard

In 2005 Harvard began a new kind of archaeological collaboration in Harvard Yard as part of the commemoration of the 350th anniversary of the Harvard Indian College. A diverse group of student excavators, Harvard faculty and staff, leaders of local Native American communities, and local preservation professionals came together over thousands of artifact fragments, which provoked exchanges and explorations about a long-buried past. Students from the *Archaeology of Harvard Yard* courses unearthed evidence of colonial Harvard as a landscape shaped by social and religious tensions that affected everything from Native American and English settler relationships to the routines of student life. As current students searched for meaning in the material remains of Harvard students of the past, three themes emerged: literacy and the Indian College; rules and religion; and negotiations of social status. Who knew small buried fragments could reveal so much?



The Harvard Yard Archaeology Project is a collaboration among the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University Native American Program, and Department of Anthropology.

PEABODY MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY

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“With the discovery of these artifacts, I could imagine myself traveling back through the centuries—19th, 18th, and 17th—to when Harvard Yard was still a pasture and to when the Indian College stood tall.”

—Lan Zhou, Harvard College 2008

Social Status: Divided We Eat



Seventeenth-century wine bottle from colonial Harvard Yard.

The 17th-century College officially favored wealthy students, such as those who paid double tuition and presented a silver dish upon matriculation. These students, known as “Fellow-Commoners,” received the right to dine at the Fellows’ table on tablecloths covered with their silver items. They enjoyed hot mulled cider, fresh fruit, and other luxuries unknown to the less affluent students, who ate from shared wooden trenchers (platters).

Literacy and the Indian College



Pieces of metal print type from colonial Harvard Yard.

Few realize that Harvard’s charter created a multicultural educational institution that was dedicated to “*the education of the English & Indian Youth of this Country in knowledge; and godlines.*” The Harvard Indian College housed the first printing press in North America, which produced the first Bible on the continent—in the local Algonquian language.

Rule (Breaking) and Religion



Late 17th–early 18th-century tobacco pipe from colonial Harvard Yard.

Like any school, Harvard has rules. Harvard’s 17th- and 18th-century rules were religious in nature, stemming from local Puritan beliefs. The College Laws forbade drinking and smoking; they even forbade certain types of adornment, such as gold buttons, which violated Puritan notions of modesty. Yet, looking at fragments found underground at Harvard Yard, student archaeologists discovered that breaking rules has a long history.

Curated by the students of Anthropology 1130 and 1131 and Peabody Museum summer interns; advised by William L. Fash, William and Muriel Seabury Howells Director, Peabody Museum; Dr. Patricia Capone, Associate Curator; Dr. Diana Loren, Associate Curator; Dr. Christina J. Hodge, Senior Curatorial Assistant.

Front: Students excavate Harvard Yard in 2007. Photos by Christina Hodge, Diana Loren, and Patricia Capone; Wine bottle from colonial Harvard Yard, PM 992-9-10/100225. Conjectural sketch of the Indian College by H. R. Shurtleff in Samuel Eliot Morrison’s 1936 *Harvard College in the 17th Century*, Vol. 1, p. 344A. Pieces of metal print type from colonial Harvard Yard. Left to right: PM 2007.20.385, PM 980-3-10/99588, PM 2007.20.705, PM 2007.20.385, PM 2007.20.705, PM 980-3-10/99586, PM 980-3-10/99589, PM 980-3-10/99587. Back: Late 17th–early 18th-century tobacco pipe from colonial Harvard Yard, PM 992-9-10/100212. All object photos by Mark Craig.