

# Ideology in Historic Cemeteries: A Case Study from St. Paul, OR

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*A cultural landscape and material culture analysis of the two historic cemeteries in St. Paul, Oregon has recently shed light on the various social and cultural forces that shaped the 'deathscape' of this small rural community during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Boulware 2008). Using the findings put forth in this study, a reexamination of the mortuary material culture and cultural landscape is conducted through the theoretical lens of ideology. A review of this often baffling concept will lay the foundation for this continuing investigation into the lives of early St. Paul residents.*

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## Introduction

There are many different approaches to historic cemetery studies, with traditional methods typically based in art history, a field that focuses only on spectacular or monumental memorials. These studies tend to be concerned with style or fashion and how these were affected by their particular historical circumstances. Genealogists often utilize historic cemeteries as data sources for the family tree constructions of particular groups or communities. Archaeologists, on the other hand, look at cemeteries as outdoor museums full of artifacts that can be studied to learn about the people that were laid to rest there and the culture of which they were a part. The impetus for this approach in North America is often credited to James Deetz and Edwin S. Dethlefsen's (1966) seminal "Death's Head, Cherub, Urn and Willow Trees." While this was a treatise on the methodological usefulness of the archaeological technique of seriation, it illustrated to many scholars in the field the wealth of information that was sitting in the local old graveyard.

Tarlow (1999) is very impressed with the depth and breadth of work being done by archaeologists and like-minded scholars in North American cemeteries. Many of these studies provided the foundation for my own thesis work, "The 'Deathscape' of St. Paul: Historic Cemeteries as Cultural Landscapes" (Boulware 2008). In particular, Richard Francaviglia (1971) and Meredith Watkins (2002) are both major contributors to the cultural landscape and material culture approach I utilized. Within this framework, I was able to elucidate aspects of the cultural climate of 19<sup>th</sup> century St. Paul, Oregon, that could not be gleaned from traditional documentary sources. For instance, I was able to show that although the two major ethnic groups in the area, the French Canadian/métis and Irish Americans, came from vastly different social and political backgrounds, they maintained a shared Catholic identity that is prominently expressed in their mortuary material culture. Recently, however, several studies published on ideology have made me wonder if a reevaluation, or more accurately an extension, of my previous interpretations is in order. A pithy review of ideology as a concept will precede a brief historical background of St. Paul and its cemeteries. A new look at these cemeteries through the lens of ideology will then follow a summary of my previous work. It is hoped that this exercise will both demonstrate the utility of ideological interpretations as well as

the importance of reevaluating one's own research within different theoretical frameworks.

### **Ideology: What is it?**

Ideology seems to be a term that is often thrown around in archaeological circles without much attention given to what the concept actually means. This is most likely due to the fact that the term itself has as many different definitions as it has proponents and critics. Depending on which definition you choose to use, ideology could be a very negative or a very positive thing (Thompson 1984). In an attempt to understand ideology and the origins of its multiple definitions, Jorge Larrain (1979) outlines the history of the concept starting with some of the central tenants of Machiavelli's work and Bacon's philosophies. Of course, Marx is the name most often associated with the term, but as can be seen in much of the literature about ideology, he was not the first to use the concept, and there have been many paths taken since his time (see Feuer 1975; Hodder 1986; Larrain 1979; Ritsert 1990; Thompson 1984).

In an attempt to navigate this complex web of meanings, the discussion outlined in Heather Burke's (2006) article will be summarized. This commentary, meant to discuss the interpretive potential of ideology in historical archaeology, has proven to be one of the most straightforward treatments of the concept. It goes so far as to provide an excellent visual representation of a multi-branched, prickly cactus to describe the various definitions and approaches used when dealing with the sometimes loaded term 'ideology'

Burke (2006) begins her analysis with the identification of two general approaches to the concept, each having their own roots in different philosophical or sociological camps. The first, what she calls the "epistemological school" sees ideology as a type of false consciousness that masks a true reality. In the vein of Marx, this true reality is the social, economic, and political struggles between the classes (Burke 2006; Leone 1982). In this view, ideology is something that exists in the minds of all individuals in a group, masking the inherent inequalities between them. The second camp, the "sociological school" championed by Althusser, does not believe that ideology is simply a product of consciousness, false or otherwise, but "that ideology was anchored in real material practices and social institutions," (Burke 2006:129). This anchor is tied to many material and immaterial aspects of our daily thoughts and lives, to things that we would view as common sense or objects and thoughts we take for granted (Bourdieu and Eagleton 1994; Hodder 1986).

Some archaeologists like Lewis Binford (1962) only equate this idea of consciousness in ideology with religious belief systems, his "ideotechnic" subsystem. He postulates that this subsystem, which is very difficult to see through archaeology, serves the function of maintaining social cohesion. Most scholars today would disagree with Binford's relegation of ideology to a subsystem. Mark P. Leone's (1984) ideological analysis of William Paca's garden has, both through praise and criticism, become the foundation for a historical archaeology of ideology that recognizes both the ways in which ideology shapes social relations and the way in which social relations shape ideology.

The common theme between both schools of thought on ideology is that while masking inequalities among members of a society, it also helps to reproduce those inequalities. Burke (2006:134) writes, "If ideology comprises

the general process of masking contradiction and reproducing unequal or conflicting social form, then it must be ideology in the service of particular interests.” She very quickly points out, by quoting Larrain (1979), that unlike the way in which many interpret Marx’s definition of ideology, these contradictions are not limited to class struggles. Inequalities between gender, ethnic or age groups can also be part of an ideological system that masks or “naturalizes” the social differences. The ways in which this is accomplished are often broken down into two subtypes of ideology, what John Plamenatz (1970) calls “sophisticated” and “unsophisticated” ideologies. These are somewhat equivalent to Marx’s non-vulgar and vulgar ideologies (Johnson 1999). Burke (2006:136) describes these two types:

A sophisticated ideology is a ‘more or less coherent system of explicit beliefs about the world’ that may be shared by only a few members of society, while an unsophisticated ideology consists of the ‘presuppositions implicit in ordinary ways of thinking and speaking about the...world; that may be shared by all, (cf. Plamenatz, 1970).

An important distinction made here is that there can potentially be multiple ideologies operating at different levels within the same society. In fact, a number of authors have gone to great lengths to stress the point that a dominant ideology may not be shared by all – a common criticism of Leone’s (1984) early work. Referencing this ideological interpretation, Ian Hodder (1986:65) states:

It may be true that the ruling classes themselves believe their own ideology, but no evidence is provided that all members of society make these linkages between garden layout and social order or that they in any way value or respect the garden. As Giddens points out, 'a good case can be made to the effect that only dominant class groups have ever been strongly committed to dominant ideologies (cf. Giddens 1979).

This brief overview of ideology has by no means been exhaustive. It is my impression from the literature that a volume dealing with all aspects of ideology, including its development as a concept and its myriad definition and uses, may be too much for any one body of work, let alone a project of this scope. However, enough key concepts have been discussed to formulate a definition of ideology(ies) that will be useful in the reevaluation of St. Paul’s cemeteries. In my opinion, ideology encompasses a whole range of unconscious beliefs, behaviors and associated objects (material culture) that operate within a group of people to camouflage as well as express inequalities between them that are the product of multiple social, political and economic causes. Ideology can act on multiple levels, where a ‘dominant’ ideology is common among one segment of the population and other ‘subordinate’ ideologies prevail in others. To summarize, as in the top of Burke’s (2006:131) cactus, current approaches to ideology (including my own) view it as an active social force and see “ideology as the study of style and symbols systems and how these are implicated in the maintenance of inequality.”

## St. Paul, OR Cemeteries: A Case Study

To truly understand any interpretations of St. Paul's cemeteries, some contextual historical information is necessary. The background presented here is an abbreviated version meant to provide the reader with only the most relevant aspects of the town's sociopolitical history. (For a full account of the development of the community and the establishment of its two cemeteries see Boulware 2008). A brief summary of my earlier work in the area, including research questions and previous analyses, is also given.



Figure 1: Location of St. Paul in the Willamette Valley, OR

### *Historical Background*

The cemeteries utilized in this study are located in a small rural community in Oregon called St. Paul (Figure 1). St. Paul is situated in the northern part of the Willamette Valley, specifically in a region called French Prairie, a name derived from its first non-native inhabitants. Originally part of the ancestral territory of the Kalapuya tribe, this area was at the heart of multiple fur trading ventures in the

early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the most prominent and enduring being operated by the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) out of eastern Canada. HBC employed a number of French Canadian/métis men as trappers, or *engages*, many of whom would eventually 'retire' to the Willamette Valley starting in the late 1820s (Brauner 1989; Gibson 1985).

Their desire to settle in the area despite HBC's regulations against permanent settlement in trapping territories was motivated by the fact that many of the men had found 'country wives' among the local Native American population and had started prolific families. James R. Gibson (1985) writes that the untapped agricultural potential of the Valley was also probably hard to resist. Within a few years of the first permanent settlement by Etienne Lucier and Pierre Belleque, the French Prairie was heavily populated by French Canadian men and their métis families.

The resultant predominantly Catholic community was dissatisfied with the only religious institution in the area – the Methodist Mission founded by Jason Lee in 1834. Many years were spent petitioning the Archdiocese in Canada for a priest who could establish a Catholic presence in the Northwest. Their wishes were finally granted in 1839 when Fathers Francois Norbert Blanchet and Modeste Demers arrived and began operating out of a small log church built in anticipation of their arrival, which was located in what is today the community of St. Paul.

The importance of the church in St. Paul cannot be stressed enough; not only did the newly arrived priests baptize the métis children and their mothers, as well as 'legitimizing' the country marriages of the former trappers and catered to their spiritual needs, they also devoted much energy into missionizing

the native population. For a number of reasons that cannot be addressed here, the Catholic priests were far more successful in this endeavor than their Methodist counterparts – a fact that is made evident by the large number of Native Americans who were buried in the early church cemetery. The St. Paul Catholic Church, under the leadership of a newly promoted Archbishop Blanchet, became the heart of Catholicism in the Northwest. At its peak, the Archdiocese in St. Paul boasted a small population of nuns (who were largely responsible for the construction of a large brick church that still stands today), separate boys and girls schools, and a Jesuit missionary.

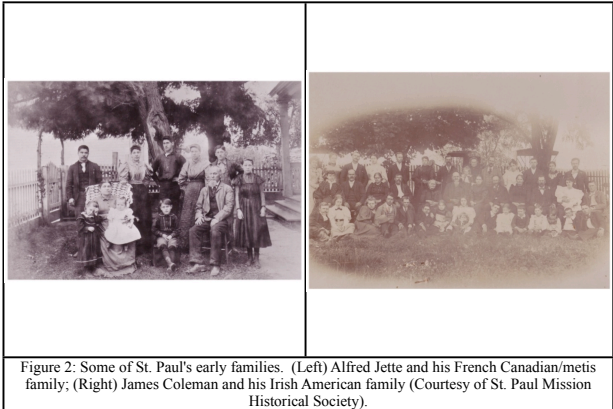


Figure 2: Some of St. Paul's early families. (Left) Alfred Jette and his French Canadian/métis family; (Right) James Coleman and his Irish American family (Courtesy of St. Paul Mission Historical Society).

This strong religious community attracted many Catholic pioneers who eventually came to Oregon from the Midwest in the 1840s and 1850s. These immigrants, many of Irish decent, started flooding into the Valley in large numbers by 1843. Many of them were expecting a Garden of Eden, a place of

untouched, rich land just waiting for the taking. Most were more than disappointed to find that the Garden was already full when they arrived (Brauner 1989). Over eighty very large French Canadian/métis families had already established productive agricultural ventures on almost all of the best arable land (Figure 2).

Gibson (1985) outlines the shifting demographics of the northern Willamette Valley, providing figures that illustrate how quickly the French Canadian/métis population in the area was overwhelmed by immigrants from back east; “In November of 1841, it is thought that the French Canadians and their families accounted for 350 individuals, compared to the approximately 150 Americans. By the middle of 1844, however, Americans outnumbered Canadians two to one. By the end of 1845, as many as 6000 people were living in the Valley, with French Canadians making up only twenty percent of that number,” (Boulware 2008). Largely due to this rapidly growing population, the Oregon Territory was assumed under the American government in 1846 and would eventually become a state in 1859. There is little documented evidence of hostility between the French Canadian/métis and the newcomers, but David R. Brauner (1989:17) writes:

The French Canadians with their Indian/Métis wives and children coupled with their association with the fur trade led American society to view them as Indians, and they were frequently dealt with accordingly. French Canadians rarely spoke English and few were literate, furthering the

misunderstandings held by Americans. Having recently wrested the Oregon country from the British, the French Canadians were viewed by Americans as the last unwanted symbol of the all powerful Hudson's Bay Company.

Harvey J. McKay (1980) details the arrival and settlement of many of St. Paul's immigrants, the majority of which were either born in Ireland or were first-generation Irish Americans. While the prominence of St. Paul as a Catholic center declined in the latter part of the 1840s and early 1850s due to a number of social and political reasons, the economic ventures of the Irish settlers were highly successful. They acquired large quantities of valuable agricultural land (much of which had been previously owned by French Canadians) and started a variety of businesses.

When the gold rush hit in California in 1848, most of the able-bodied men in the French Prairie left to find their fortunes. Quite a few of the Irish individuals did, some in the gold fields, but others greatly profited from supply stores that catered to speculators. The French Canadian/métis men who went south were not so lucky, many of them contracting cholera and either dying far from home or returning only to infect their highly susceptible part-Indian families. European diseases were a problem that had been plaguing both the Native American population as well as the métis families for years, but this particular epidemic was especially disastrous because their numbers were already being overwhelmed by the ever expanding immigrant populace. This demographic trend continued throughout the rest of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the original French Canadian population was completely absorbed and assimilated into the growing

American 'melting pot,' (McKay 1980).

Throughout the course of this historical development, two cemeteries were established in St. Paul. The first, today called the Pioneer Cemetery by St. Paul residents,

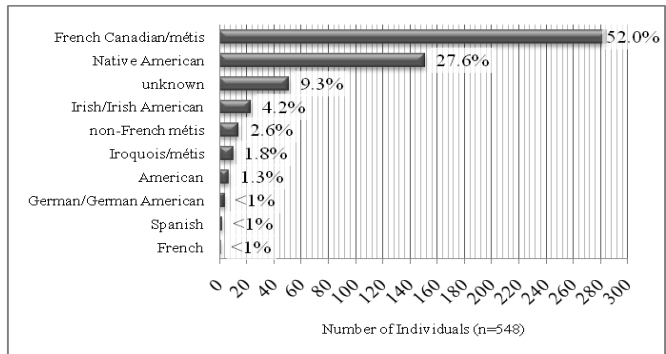


Figure 3: Pioneer Cemetery ethnicity chart (Boulware 2008: 34)

was consecrated by Father Blanchet shortly after he arrived in 1839. The first burial recorded was that of a young Native American woman, "Marie Indian, slave at the house of Joseph Delard," interred on January 16, 1839 (Munnick and Warner 1979:A97). She, like many other Native Americans in the area, had been baptized by the priests and was allowed to be buried in the church graveyard alongside the French Canadian men and their families. Figure 3 is a summary of the Pioneer Cemetery population.

St. Paul's Cemetery, the new cemetery established in 1874, became the main repository for the community's dead, though the last burial in the Pioneer Cemetery occurred years later in 1891. Much of my previous work focused on identifying the factors that would have influenced cemetery selection during the years in which both cemeteries were active. After the last burial in the older graveyard, it was more or less abandoned by the community. In 1939, when the



Figure 4: Pioneer Cemetery as it looks today (Photo taken by author)

town was preparing for a momentous centennial celebration, it was decided that the overgrown cemetery, by then on the main road into town, had become an eyesore. All the brush and blackberry bushes that had taken over were bulldozed into a nearby ditch, along with all surviving grave markers. French Prairie historian Harriet Munnick (1978:13) wrote the following about the incident:

At some time during the 1930's a drastic clean-up took place, giving much distress to many of the old families. 'You're desecrating sacred ground!' one grandfather shouted, but to no avail, for the bulldozers swept brush, stones and all remaining markers over the creek bank, leaving a level expanse to be planted to lawn. A boulder with a plaque and a large cross now identify the place.

Recently, the residents of St. Paul have attempted to right the wrong committed by their forbears by rededicating the Pioneer Cemetery and erecting new plaques with the names of every man, woman, and child buried there (Figure 4).

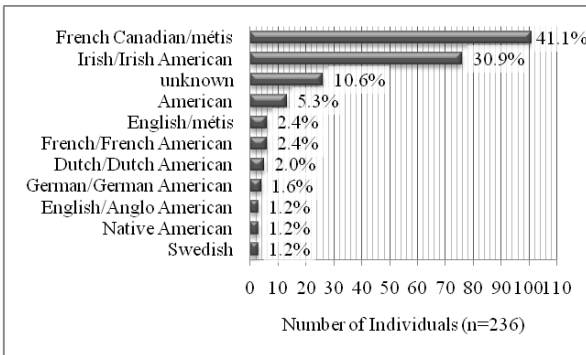


Figure 5: St. Paul's Cemetery ethnicity chart, 1874-1905 (Boulware 2008: 40)

The first interment in the newer St. Paul's Cemetery was of an Irish immigrant in 1874. By the end of the decade, this graveyard was the primary cemetery with fewer and fewer individuals choosing to bury family members in Pioneer Cemetery. The hypothesis concerning cemetery selection, as presented in my previous

publication, is that family ties were the strongest driving force behind the preference for one over the other. Families, both French Canadian and Irish American, that had been in the area the longest tended to continue using the older cemetery while newer arrivals selected St. Paul's Cemetery (Figure 5) (Boulware 2008). The newer cemetery, which is still active, has undergone a number of aesthetic revivals that have greatly modified the landscape, but many of the original grave markers are still intact (Figure 6).

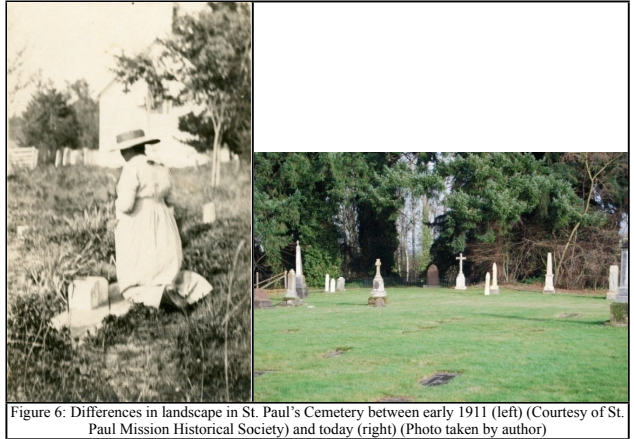


Figure 6: Differences in landscape in St. Paul's Cemetery between early 1911 (left) (Courtesy of St. Paul Mission Historical Society) and today (right) (Photo taken by author)

### *Previous Research and Findings*

The original approach to the analysis of St. Paul's two cemeteries was situated in a cultural landscape and material culture framework. Documentary research, as well as a detailed grave marker survey, formed the foundation for understanding the evolving 'deathscape' of St. Paul. Because there are no extant headstones in the Pioneer Cemetery, the grave marker analysis was limited to St. Paul's Cemetery. In an attempt to keep the scope of the initial project under control, only markers dating from the inception of the cemetery to 1905 were recorded. This latter year coincides with the end of Francavaglia's (1971) Victorian Period and represents a date in when attitudes towards grave memorialization in North America started to change dramatically. Both Francavaglia (1971) and Kenneth Ames (1981) provide excellent summaries of this shift.

Multiple mapping strategies were utilized to facilitate an analysis of the landscape's spatial component. These maps included both extant grave markers and the known locations of the numerous unmarked graves in the cemetery. The investigation of what factors may have contributed to the 'erosion' of an individual's presence in the cemetery landscape formed an integral part of my interpretations of St. Paul's cemeteries. A more detailed description of the methods employed in this original study can be found in Boulware (2008). The research questions that guided this analysis were as follows:

- 1) What does a material culture analysis of the gravestones in St. Paul's Cemetery tell us about the community in which they were erected? Does the occurrence or frequency of certain marker forms, motifs, and inscriptions throughout the study period correspond to trends observed in other nineteenth century cemeteries, or has this community's unique historical development effected the mortuary material culture?

- 2) Are there any cultural patterns that emerge when St. Paul's Cemetery is analyzed as a cultural landscape? If so, what elements can be identified as influencing agents?
- 3) What factors were motivating cemetery selection during the years in which both the Pioneer and St. Paul's cemeteries were active? How has the differential treatment of the cemeteries by the community affected the overall cultural landscape?
- 4) What variables affected the 'erosion' of St. Paul's mortuary landscape? Which individuals are more likely to be represented in the cultural landscape and why? Why are some individuals or groups no longer present? (Boulware 2008: 3)

The responses to the first and last questions will prove to be the most useful in an ideological reevaluation of St. Paul's cemeteries. The discussion of the latter was focused on the identification of a shared Catholic identity that can be seen in the frequency and distribution of motif types and inscriptions on the extant grave markers. Despite vastly different cultural and historical backgrounds, almost all French Canadian/métis and American immigrant tombstones display symbols and textual references with strong Catholic affiliations. Harold Mytum (2004) details many of the most common Catholic iconography found in cemeteries, almost all of which are present in some form or another in St. Paul's Cemetery. No obvious ethnic differences could be detected based on motif or inscription (see Chapter 6, Boulware 2008).

Four different variables were analyzed in an attempt to answer the final research question: sex, age, ethnicity, and status. In total, 108 unmarked graves were identified for the 1874 – 1905 study period. Graves are not marked usually due to either preservation issues (the original marker was made out of a nonpermanent material like wood or a stone marker was broken or had eroded away) or the grave was never marked at all. While a number of scholars (see Foster and Hummel 1995; Watkins 2002) have postulated that women are more likely to have unmarked graves in historic cemeteries due to their lower social status in comparison to men, this was found not to be the case in St. Paul. In

fact, at 50.9% (n=55), males had the highest number of unmarked graves, while females represented only 46.2% (n=50) and no gender could be assigned to three (2.8%) of the unmarked burials.

Next to gender, age is considered the most likely factor in unmarked burial status (Dethlefsen 1969; Foster and

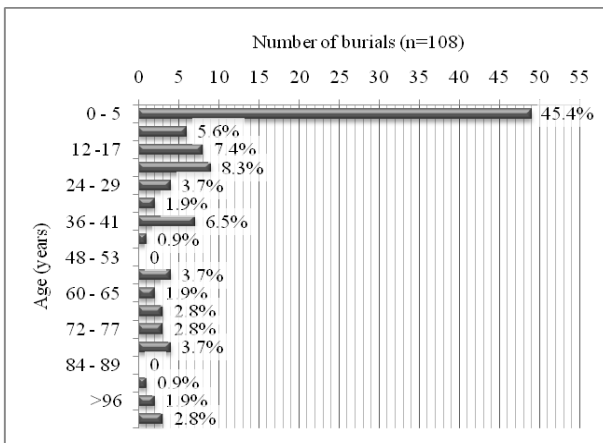


Figure 7: Unmarked burials by age, St. Paul's Cemetery (Boulware 2008: 87)

Hummel 1995; Watkins 2002). There are a number of reasons for this, the most often cited being that, having lived a short life, children did not make enough of an impact on society to warrant significant expenditure on grave memorialization (Mytum 2004; Watkins 2002). As can be seen in Figure 7, this was obviously a dominating variable affecting unmarked status. Further discussion of the implications of this pattern can be found in Boulware (2008).

Perhaps the most relevant to an ideological interpretation is the discussion of ethnicity and status and how it might have affected whether or not an individual in St. Paul would receive a lasting grave marker. A summary of unmarked graves (Table 1) illustrates that there clearly is a difference in frequency based on ethnic background. Even though French Canadian/métis make up a large portion of the interments during the study period (n=101), the majority of their graves are currently unmarked (62.4%). The other prominent ethnic group in St. Paul, the Irish Americans, only have 16.4% (n=14) of their members not represented in the cemetery landscape.

Ethnicity	Unmarked Burials	Total Burials	Percent Unmarked
Swedish	3	3	100%
Native American	3	3	100%
<b>French Canadian/Métis</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>62.4%</b>
Unknown	16	26	61.5%
Dutch/Dutch American	2	5	40%
English/Métis	2	6	33.3%
American	4	13	30.8%
<b>Irish/Irish American</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>18.4%</b>
French/French American	1	6	16.7%
English/Anglo American	0	3	0%
German/German American	0	4	0%

Table 1: Unmarked graves in St. Paul's Cemetery by ethnic group (Boulware 2008: 92)

An important point that was made in my previous discussion was that ethnicity and socioeconomic status were not always correlated. Though the French Canadian/métis families were overwhelmed by the American immigrants, many of whom were in fact more prosperous, some of the original retired fur trappers who were very respected within the community were quite economically successful. The specific example used to reinforce this assertion is that of André Longtain (Figure 8):



Figure 8: (Left) Andre Longtain (date unknown) (Courtesy of St. Paul Mission Historical Society), (Center) Provisional Government monument at Champoeg (Courtesy of St. Paul Mission Historical Society), (Right) Andre Longtain's unmarked plot (Photo taken by author)

“Further support that status was not a significant influence on unmarked graves is the burial of Andre Longtain. Longtain was one of the original French Canadian fur trappers to settle on French Prairie and is ‘among the most prominent early settlers of Champoeg,’ (Hussey, 1967, p. 79). His name appears on the 1834 letter requesting that a priest be sent to the Willamette Valley and half the Champoeg township was plotted on his 563 acre Donation Land Claim (Hussey, 1967; Munnick & Warner,

1979). He was also one of the fifty-two men who voted in favor of establishing a provisional government. Longtain's name is included on the monument erected at Champoege to commemorate this event. And yet his grave in St. Paul's Cemetery is unmarked. Interestingly, the grave of his Irish son-in-law Thomas Herbert, who died in a bar fight, is in the plot directly to the east and is memorialized by a large obelisk marker," (Boulware 2008: 94-95).

*Grave Marker Reevaluation: Ideology in St. Paul's Cemeteries*

*Unsophisticated ideology.* While my assertion that there was a shared Catholic identity in the St. Paul's Cemetery is supported by the ubiquitous nature of Catholic motifs, my previous interpretation stopped there. However, I now believe that what has been interpreted as a shared identity may in fact be part of an unsophisticated ideological system that was masking the growing inequalities between the French Canadian/métis and the immigrants, particularly the Irish Americans. Matthew Johnson (1999:94) writes, "In a simple view, while social foundations are creaking and society becomes increasingly unequal and unjust, people's beliefs [ideology] act to 'paper over the creaks', to make the existing system appear legitimate."

As stated above by Brauner (1989), the newly arrived immigrants saw the pre-existing French Canadian/métis population as the 'other.' They spoke a different language, were uneducated, and were very much entwined with the local Native American population through both trade and marriage – but they were also Catholic. This one shared trait gave them common ground, and in many ways their worldviews would have overlapped. So while the French Canadian/métis were being socially and, perhaps more importantly, economically marginalized their shared Catholic faith helped to "paper over the creaks" in the St. Paul foundation and camouflage conflict that was most certainly boiling just under the surface:

"Suppression of conflict is the key to the operation of ideology...A society with a changing technology or means of production, or a society with a shifting mode of production - *which means shifting distribution of ownership and wealth between its segments* - will experience conflict and contradiction because of the change, [*emphasis added*]" (Leone 1982:748).

The fact that there is no documented evidence of open hostilities between these groups despite their multiple inequalities illustrates the effectiveness of this concealing ideology.

*Sophisticated ideology.* While the similar motif patterns found on the grave markers are evidence of an unsophisticated ideology, the differences found within may be indicators of a sophisticated ideology at work. One of the most obvious differences, as described above, is the different frequencies of unmarked graves between the two major ethnic groups. Simply put, Irish Americans put more energy and expenditure into erecting more permanent markers than did the French Canadian/métis. And as illustrated above with the case of André Longtain, status alone does not account for these discrepancies. My previous interpretations were in line with those of Watkins (2002), who noted in her

research area that Irish American Catholics were far more concerned with grandiose displays of mortuary memorialization than were French Canadians, even when they could not afford it.

The need for conspicuous consumption in the cemetery was very much a product of a pervasive Victorian worldview which fetishized death (Ames 1981; Curl 2000; Francaviglia 1971; Schlereth 1991). Aubrey Cannon (1989) maintains that often the Victorian desire for commemoration of the dead superseded a family's socioeconomic status. He writes, "it could be said that the desire to secure respectful interment was the strongest and most widely diffused feeling among laboring people and would cause them to neglect their well-being and that of their families in order to ensure provision of sufficient funds for a 'proper' funeral," (Cannon 1989:438). The fact that the Irish Americans participated in this worldview while the French Canadian/métis did not may be a product of the former's dominant ideology. It could have been an unconscious way to articulate their unequal social relations with the French Canadian/métis in much the same way William Paca used his garden to negotiate his position among Annapolis' elite (Leone 1982). By erecting the large, obelisk-style grave markers that were so fashionable across America during the Victorian period, the Irish Americans were visually marking themselves apart from the 'other.'

### Conclusion

It is hoped that the discussion presented here illustrates at least a small part of the potential usefulness of studying ideology in historic cemeteries. While there are a number of far more complex evaluations in scholarly literature (see for example McGuire 1988), this has proved to be a useful exercise. I contend that reevaluating interpretations made in the past is an important part of intellectual and theoretical development. Too often scholars begin to let their earlier work become dogmatic and nonnegotiable. Mark P. Leone, mentioned above for his work on William Paca's garden, has provided an excellent model for reevaluating past interpretations (Leone et al 1995). One way in which his initial conclusions about ideology and Paca's property were very influential is the criticism leveled towards him for focusing too much on the 'dominant ideology' of Annapolis and making the assumption that all segments of that society would be participating in it (Burke 2006; Hodder 1986). Instead of digging in his heels and resisting the criticism, he has made a valiant effort to uncover the ideologies of all those individuals who would have interacted with Annapolis' elite (Leone et al. 1995). In doing so, he and his team hope to give a voice to the marginalized and shed light on their relatively undocumented lives, much in the same way I have tried to do for the early residents of St. Paul.

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