

DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ADJUNCT PROFESSOR

July 29, 2011 Diefenerfer Archaeological Prospection, Community Archaeology, Day of Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2011, Education, Maritime Archaeology, Science, Survey Anthropology, Archaeological sub-disciplines, archaeologist, Archaeology, Endowment for the Humanities Landmarks, Great Lakes, instructor in the United States, maritime archaeology, Michigan, professor, Remotely operated underwater vehicle, Shipwreck, shipwreck site, sonar devices, United States, USA

By training, I'm an archaeologist, but currently I teach cultural anthropology for a community college in the Northeastern section of the United States. I leave my archaeology work for volunteer archaeology workshops for middle school students, writing pieces for a science advocacy's publication, and for whenever I can incorporate my knowledge of the discipline to my students (to give them a preview of what else is included within anthropological research). This summer, my work included items like lesson and syllabus planning, previewing videos and DVDs for classtime discussions, and adapting to the different textbooks selected for the fall semester. I also worked on writing book reviews, columns, and articles for submission to anthropological and science-based publications.

However, this week, I'm partaking in a National Endowment for the Humanities Landmarks workshop geared toward community college faculty, where my days are chockful of archaeological work. Earlier this week, I got to see a ROV (remotely operated vehicle) device in action and also ever so briefly use it to scan over a shipwreck site in one of the Great Lakes. We also watched others use sonar devices under the lake and bay waters. We've gone further up the coast to see the remains of a wreck washed ashore and worked on practicing mapping the pieces which remain. Although I have never formally studied the Great Lakes or maritime/nautical archaeology beyond archaeobotanical coursework, my summer included days of reading articles and books on the subject matter.

You see no matter what you do as an archaeologist, constantly learning subject matter is essential work and involves a level of professional development. I came here to upstate Michigan this week to learn, explore, but most of all, to find new materials, approaches and activities to spark a new level of teaching from within. My students are my primary focus, although a lot of what went into my decision to apply this spring for this particular workshop series included the chance to spend a week somewhere I had never travelled, with facilitators and colleagues I never met before this week. Of course, maritime history and archaeology are topics I never explored before as well.

Today, we will be coming together as 25 students who teach across the United States (and within different academic departments and disciplines) to learn from experienced archaeologists, historians, doctoral students and governmental employees for a final day of workshops. While it is hard to imagine surpassing snorkeling over a wreck, and surveying a wreck on the shoreline yesterday, the same speculation could have been made earlier in the week. I mean, how do you top using and watching others use an ROV over a wreck? Or, seeing sonar being used to map shapes and features on the bottom of the water? The life of an archaeologist or an aficionado of the field can be quite eclectic, but no matter what your age, pathway, or deviations throughout the course of life, no matter what, you can always find your way to or back to, archaeology and enjoy the experiences.

For now, I plan on working on my final assignment then heading off to the marine sanctuary for a day of presentations, a boat ride, a few more research and photography hours, and then closing events. I should have

some photos on my webspace at some point, so do feel free to take a look and also to write me an email with any questions. Likewise, if you are a community college instructor in the United States, I highly encourage you to check the NEH website for more on all the professional development opportunities which could be awaiting you as well next summer!