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EARLY LATE WOODLAND OF SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN

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# STONE TOMBS AND ANCIENT RITUAL: STATUS MARKING AND SOCIAL ROLES IN THE EARLY LATE WOODLAND OF SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN

John Norder, Jane Eva Baxter, A. Russell Nelson, and John M. O'Shea

## ABSTRACT

The discovery of an unusual stone-lined burial chamber in Ann Arbor, Michigan, during an archaeological salvage excavation prompted the reexamination of certain aspects of mortuary ritual and social organization in the Early Late Woodland in southeastern Michigan. Previous research in this region is underdeveloped with respect to hypotheses regarding ritual practice, social marking, and gender for this time period. We focus on a class of burials from several sites whose funerary treatment appears to mark a community leadership role and discuss the implications for gender and social organization during this time period.

Among the mounds of the Mississippi, and further south, are occasionally found some *built of stones*. An instance of a similar construction is reported to me by Mr. Day, of Romeo, associated with the ancient remains in Macomb County. He says: "In several places in this vicinity are found mounds made of stones, nicely piled up to height of four to five feet, like a hay-cock. [Hubbard 1887:209]

In archaeological mortuary studies, variability in funerary assemblages and practices is typically understood to reflect differences in social position and cultural organization (Goldstein 1981; O'Shea 1984; Saxe 1970). In terms of social position, the traditional line of thought is that the role a person held in life is often marked unambiguously in death by certain classes and quantities of artifacts, type of burial, burial placement in relation to land features and other burials, and construction. By identifying social status in funerary populations it is then possible to develop explanations regarding overall social organization.

Early Late Woodland funerary sites in southeastern Michigan exhibit a great deal of variability in the attributes outlined above, but detailed analyses are lacking. Part of this problem stems from a lack of complete data for numerous sites, many of which were excavated by amateurs long before professional archaeology arose (e.g. Gillman 1874, 1877; Hubbard 1887; Riley 1881). The result has been an incomplete record that, like the above introductory quote, provides a few

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tantalizing references with an occasional detailed description in old journals, random newspaper articles, or the even rarer published manuscripts.

Until fairly recently, another evident problem has been a relative lack of interest in the topic by both professionals and amateurs (see Stothers 1999). While several dissertations and publications have examined specific aspects of Early Late Woodland cultural relationships and practices (Brashler 1981; Fitting 1965; Halsey 1976, 1981; Luedtke 1976; O'Shea 1987; Wilkinson 1971), theories concerning the social organization of the regional communities during this time period have remained largely underdeveloped. As one researcher noted, "Archaeologists did not view Michigan as an area where exciting things might be found and careers advanced" (Halsey 1981:17).

This paper specifically examines mortuary patterns in southeastern Michigan in light of the discovery and analysis of two burial sites, Brandon (20WA336) and Olson (20WA111), in the Huron River Valley in Washtenaw County, Michigan. The Brandon site presents an enigma in Michigan archaeological research as the only documented stone-lined tomb in the state for this time period. On the other hand, the Olson site is more consistent with other documented sites in southeastern Michigan. Overall, these Early Late Woodland funerary data suggest that there are important, unambiguously marked social roles that were open to both sexes, an interpretation in contrast to that of Halsey (1976, 1981) but in accord with that of O'Shea (1987). What we suggest is that this social role may have been open, but that the burial assemblages for males and females possessed differences that raise questions concerning gender marking. Comparison with other archaeological sites in the region and ethnohistoric data on both Algonquian and Iroquoian regional cultures is also used in this study as a means of identifying possible historical correlates for this social role.

## **Previous Research**

Several site reports (DeVisshcher 1957; Fitting 1965; Fitting and Sasse 1969; Greenman 1957; Halsey 1968, 1984; Lovis 1979; Lovis and Sauer 1977; Pilling 1961a, 1961b) and synthetic works have examined Early Late Woodland mortuary behavior in southeastern Michigan (Abel et al. 1994; Greenman 1945; Halsey 1976, 1981; O'Shea 1987; Stothers and Abel 1996; Stothers and Bechtel 1994). Of these synthetic studies, one of the earliest was a material culture study that focused on the Early Late Woodland burial assemblages found at the Bussinger site (20SA194), a large cemetery located in the Saginaw River Valley (Halsey 1976, 1999). Based on comparisons of grave assemblages at several sites, Halsey identified what he termed the Wayne Mortuary Complex, a "distinctive, recurring grouping of certain varieties of artifacts buried with selected individuals" (Halsey 1981:17; see also Halsey 1984; Lovis 1979; Lovis and Sauer 1977).

Halsey suggested that extensive trade networks probably linked this complex with other regional complexes in the Midwest and Northeast, as evidenced by the distribution of defining material culture items. Status marking, described as achieved rather than ascribed, was clearly represented by the range of artifact

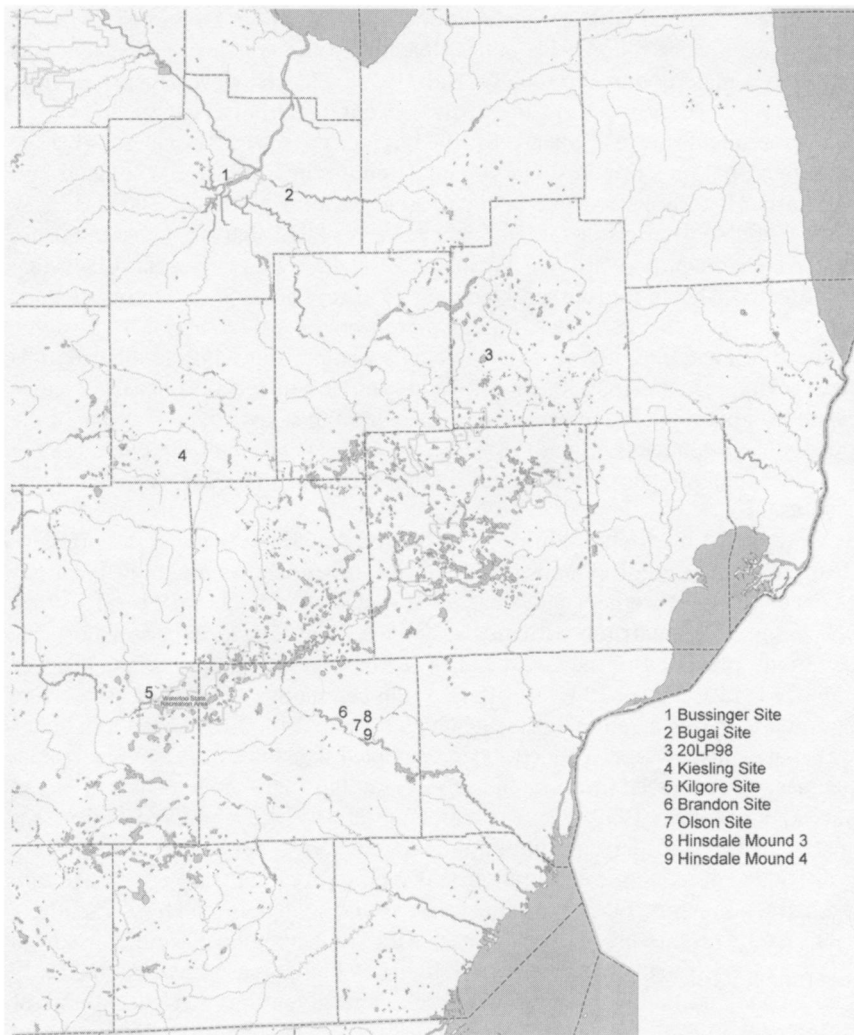
combinations found with burials. With only one exception, the most elaborate assemblages were found with males, leading to the conclusion that this was probably a male-dominated society (Halsey 1981:22). However, there was little theoretical discussion on how this social system might have functioned.

A subsequent study (O'Shea 1987) did not focus specifically on the Early Late Woodland but on shifts in social organization through the Late Woodland into the Early Historic period in Michigan. Analysis of a particular class of Early Late Woodland burials at the Bussinger site revealed that they possessed not only a large quantity of artifacts but also several different classes of artifacts that represented "the entire [durable] technological repertoire of ... temperate zone foragers" (O'Shea 1987:74). Although there were only three burials of this type at the Bussinger site, it seemed plausible by comparison with the other burials that they represented individuals who held some sort of specialized role or status position. This role also appeared to be open to both sexes, given that one of the burials was a female (O'Shea 1987:75–76). With such a small sample it was not possible to interpret the specific nature of this status position other than identifying its presence.

More recent research on this topic proffered the notion that certain mortuary districts, composed of mounds or cemeteries, functioned as trade fair locations (Abel et al. 1994; Stothers and Abel 1996, Stothers and Bechtel 1994). This idea was based on comparisons with the Feast of the Dead, a historic-period mortuary ceremony practiced in the Great Lakes region, mainly by Iroquoians (Tooker 1964:134–140; Trigger 1990:126–131). At this ceremony, "revered ancestors were honored in public assemblies during which cut and drilled skulls and longbones were put on display as suspended and reassembled skeletons, while circular cranial plaques were removed from crania ... to serve as talismans or mementos of sacred ancestors" (Stothers 1999: 202). This ceremony and its Late Woodland predecessor served to bring dispersed communities together in order to promote "social, political, and economic integration and reciprocity" and through "trade and exchange, kinship, marriage, and other social and political ties" (Stothers 1999:202). This interpretation suggests that the same ceremonial form also existed 1,000 years before the Historic-period ritual to which it is ascribed. For the Early Late Woodland this is a problematic argument, given that there are a host of differences in the funerary behaviors (O'Shea 1987). The trade fair argument nonetheless remains tenable but is not one pursued here.

## The Brandon and Olson Sites

The impetus for this study stems from the analysis of two sites located along the Huron River in Washtenaw County. The first, the Brandon site, was discovered by workers during construction of a private residence in August of 1998 and was located on a hillside overlooking the river (Figure 1). As with many construction site discoveries, the burial was first observed after human remains were found in the back dirt of a trench excavation. Construction was halted upon this discovery and the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department was contacted. The case



**Figure 1. Selected Early Late Woodland burial sites in southeastern Michigan.**

detective, in turn, contacted the University of Michigan Museum of Anthropology (UMMA). Due to time restrictions, archaeologists were only allowed an afternoon to examine and remove the burial. Figure 2 is an overview of the site as encountered by UMMA archaeologists.

Upon first examination it was impossible to determine the precise nature or age of the burial. It was the initial on-site determination that this was a potential accident or crime scene in which the individual, a woman, had somehow fallen



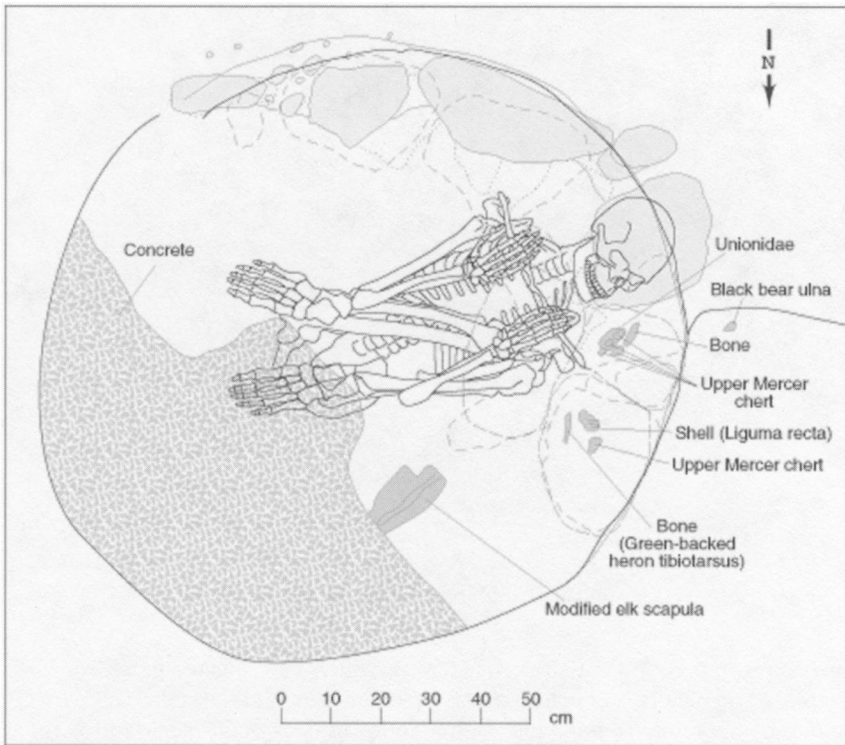


**Figure 2. Overview of the Brandon site as encountered.**

or been dropped down a stone-lined well, which had later collapsed or been collapsed on her. This conclusion was based on the observed, relatively “fresh” nature of the remains, complete with an odor of decay consistent with a more recent burial. In addition, one workman at the site claimed that he had seen fragments of a flannel shirt in the back dirt of the trench. The final factor was the construction of the feature that, although somewhat unusual due to the large size of the stones, seemed fairly consistent with a stone-lined well. This did not turn out to be the case. Rather than a historic accident or crime scene, this was a very unusual Early Late Woodland burial.

The burial feature, despite heavy disturbance from construction activities, was encountered nearly one meter below the modern ground surface and was a subterranean chamber burial lined with stones ranging in size from 12-cm round cobbles to elliptical, slab rocks over 60 cm long (Figure 3). Assuming a dome shape to the burial feature, the horizontal diameter was 1.2 m with a height of 1.1 m. Wall stones were laid in rough courses, to nearly 90 cm in height, with some attempt at fitting, before the burial was “roofed” over. The floor of the feature was not stone lined, although a series of flat slabs served as footings for the walls. Several of these slabs were placed on top of the artifacts accompanying the burial but did not cover the skeleton (Figure 3). The skeleton was encountered on its back at the base of the feature, leaning slightly toward the left with the arms uncrossed and folded up to the shoulders with legs drawn up and the knees folded over to the left. The body was oriented southwest-northeast with head at the southwest.

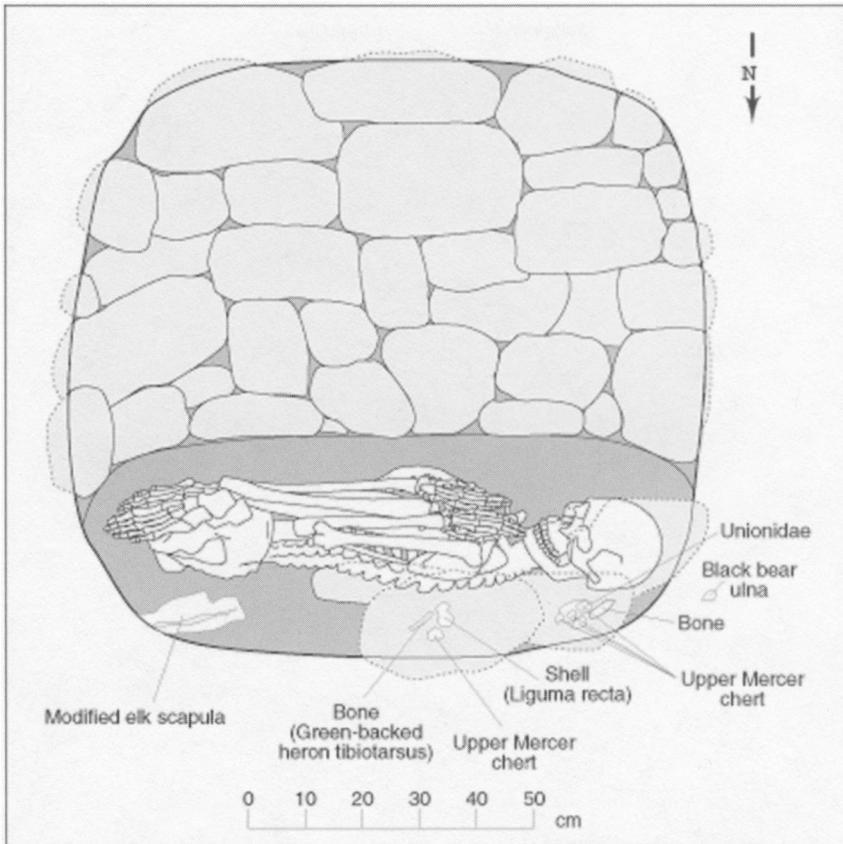
It was apparent from field observations that the surface of the hill had been



**Figure 3. Composite plan view of the Brandon site burial.**

modified significantly during at least one previous historic construction episode. Unfortunately, we were unable to conclusively determine the full extent of this modification. As a result, we have only a hypothetical idea of where the chamber burial was placed in relation to the original surface of the hill. Based on the geomorphology of the surrounding hillside on which the burial was found, a general extrapolation suggests that the burial was placed on the north side of the hill overlooking a ravine that empties into the Huron River. Furthermore, it is likely that the top of the burial feature was at a shallower depth than encountered. Construction appears to have been into the side of the hill near its crest. This would have allowed the remains to be placed in through the side of the chamber. The burial was then sealed by more stones and presumably capped with soil. Figure 4 represents an idealized reconstruction of the burial and its construction.

The presence of a sandier soil with a high concentration of charcoal within the burial feature suggests that the interior surface of the burial chamber may have been prepared in some manner, possibly by ritual prescription, prior to inhumation. Samples of this surface were taken from under and adjacent to the remains for laboratory analysis. Artifacts found with the burial, detailed below, were found



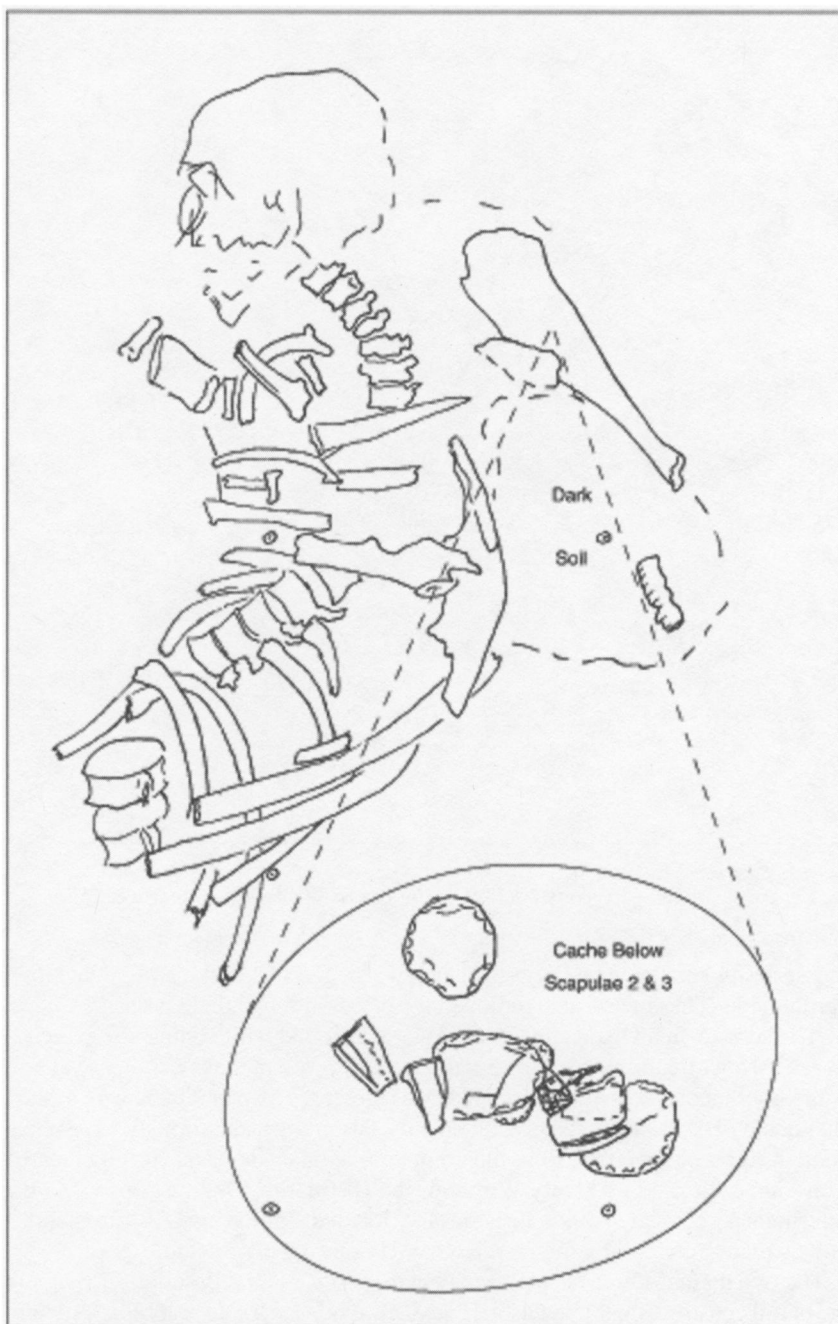
**Figure 4. Idealized reconstruction of the Brandon site burial feature.**

in a series of small clusters near the head, waist, and feet of the individual along her left side. These were also removed for preservation and analysis.

The second site, Olson site (20WA111), was found while doing site searches in UMMA collections for comparable sites in Washtenaw County. Several contemporaneous sites were found in UMMA records, two of which were mound sites and will be discussed below, but only the Olson site had information complete enough to be of specific use in the comparative analysis of our original study. This site, excavated by Henry Wright of the UMMA in 1978, was also a single interment site located on a hillside and located approximately three miles downstream overlooking the Huron River (Figure 1).

The two main differences between the Olson site and the Brandon site were in the burial construction. First, Olson lacked any evidence for the tomblike structure found at Brandon. Second, it contained a male. Based on photographs and diagrams made at the site (Figure 5), the individual was observed to be oriented





**Figure 5. Field sketch of the Olson site burial.**

north-south with the head to the north. The body was lying on its left side in a semiflexed position. Artifacts currently held by the UMMA, in addition to the remains, were found in a distinct cluster on the left side of the body near the shoulder. Furthermore, an organic staining and unusually coarse sandy soil were both found next to and underneath the body, samples of which are in UMMA collections.

#### *Radiometric and Relative Dates*

At this time, we only have two radiometric  $^{14}\text{C}$  dates for the Brandon site, obtained from two samples processed by Beta Analytic. The first sample was a piece of wood charcoal found immediately under the skeleton that yielded an uncalibrated date of  $135 \pm 60$  (Beta-124081; wood charcoal;  $\delta^{13}\text{C} = -22.3\%$ ). The second was a collagen sample taken from a rib of the skeleton that yielded an uncalibrated date of  $1100 \pm 50$  (Beta-124082; human bone collagen;  $\delta^{13}\text{C} = -27.3\%$ ). These dates, when calibrated (Stuiver et al. 1998; Talma and Vogel 1993), were cal A.D. 670, 1-sigma span cal A.D. 650–705 for the charcoal sample and cal A.D. 975, 1-sigma span cal A.D. 890–1000 for the bone collagen sample. The charcoal sample date places the burial in the middle of the Early Late Woodland for this region (A.D. 500–900) while the bone collagen sample places it at the end. Dating of the Olson site is based upon the inclusion of a Wayne Ware, or Gibraltar Cordmarked (Stothers 1999:195), pottery vessel and diagnostic Jack's Reef projectile point, both of which are types commonly found in Early Late Woodland sites in southeastern Michigan.

#### *Burial Assemblages*

Twenty-seven grave goods were interred with each set of skeletal remains. These fall into four broad categories of artifacts: ceramics, lithics, modified fauna, and unmodified fauna. The assemblages for both burials are summarized in Table 1. Two flotation samples taken from the Brandon site yielded no additional artifactual or carbonized organic remains. No flotation samples were taken at the Olson site.

#### *Ceramics*

No ceramics were found at the Brandon site. At the Olson site, the incomplete remains of one ceramic vessel were recovered. This vessel was an undecorated, deeply cord-marked vessel that falls typological into the category of Wayne Ware (Fitting 1970) or Gibraltar Cordmarked (Stothers 1999:195), depending on the typology used. Such vessels are made using a paddle and anvil technique, with the interior typically smoothed and the exterior cord marked from rim to base. Decoration, when it occurs, is typically in the form of cord-impressed or incised geometric designs on the neck and rim and occasionally the body (Fitting 1970:151; Stothers 1999:195–196). The vessel has a rim diameter of 14.2 cm. Vessel height cannot be determined, but it is assumed that the vessel was globular in shape. This ceramic type is frequently found in sites in the region in both

**Table 1. Burial Assemblages for the Brandon and Olson Sites.**

<i>Brandon Site</i>	<i>Olson Site</i>
Female, 30–45 yrs. (semiflexed)	Male, 54–78 yrs. (semiflexed)
Ceramics	Ceramics
—	1 Wayne Ware Vessel
Lithics	Lithics
1 flake (quartzite)	3 flakes (unknown chert)
4 retouched flakes (Upper Mercer)	—
1 end scraper (Upper Mercer)	—
1 bifacial scraper (Upper Mercer)	—
—	1 blade (unknown chert)
—	1 drill (unknown chert)
—	2 cores (unknown chert)
—	1 bifacial preform (unknown chert)
1 slate disk	5 slate disks
—	2 sandstone abraders
—	1 argillite fragment (possibly incidental)
—	1 groundstone pendant
Modified fauna	Modified fauna
1 elk scapula (hoe/scraper)	1 deer scapula (hoe/scraper)
—	1 deer tibia (beamer)
—	1 unknown long bone fragment (beamer)
Unmodified fauna	Unmodified fauna
1 turkey tarsometatarsus	1 turkey tarsometatarsus
1 green-backed heron tarsometatarsus	—
2 freshwater mussel shells	1 freshwater mussel shell
11 unidentified shells	—
—	1 beaver incisor
—	1 deer scapula
—	3 unidentifiable small bone fragments
1 fragment elk radius (right)	—
2 fragments bear ulna (right)	—
Total	Total
27	27

mortuary and nonmortuary contexts (Fitting 1970).

### *Lithics*

At the Brandon site, the lithic assemblage consisted of two scraping tools and four retouched flakes, all of Upper Mercer chert from central and northern Ohio, and a single quartzite flake (Table 2). The use of Upper Mercer chert is a hallmark of the Early Late Woodland in Michigan, particularly as a raw material for ceremonial and mortuary items (Luedtke 1976). In addition, an irregular chipped slate “disk” was found in the burial feature, a common inclusion in Early Late Woodland burials (Halsey 1976). The disk measures approximately 8.5 x 7 cm and is less than 1 cm in maximum thickness (Figure 6). Half of the disk, upon

Table 2. Brandon and Olson Site Lithics.

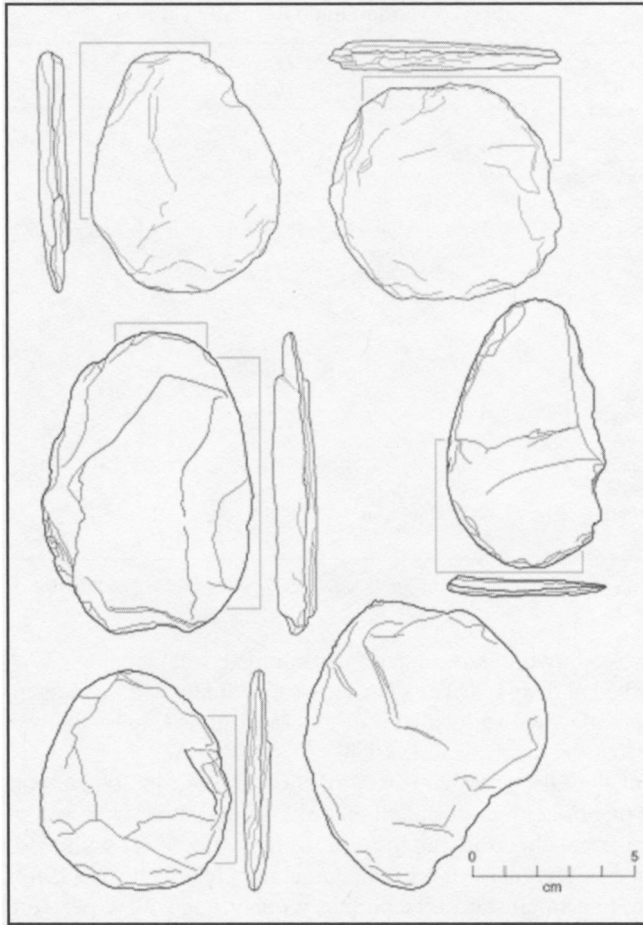
<i>Material</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Length (cm)</i>	<i>Width (cm)</i>	<i>Thickness (cm)</i>	<i>Weight (g)</i>
Brandon Site					
Quartzite	flake	4.0	2.5	.8	6.8
Upper Mercer chert	bifacial scraper	3.6	3.2	.5	4.6
Upper Mercer chert	end scraper	3.1	2.7	.6	6.2
Upper Mercer chert	retouched flake	2.4	1.5	.2	.7
Upper Mercer chert	retouched flake	5.2	2.8	.8	12.1
Upper Mercer chert	retouched flake	2.7	2.1	.8	5.1
Upper Mercer chert	retouched flake	3.2	2.0	.3	2.5
Olson Site					
Unknown chert	flake	1.4	1.1	.2	.4
Unknown chert	flake	2.7	1.3	.2	.8
Unknown chert	flake	1.9	1.6	.3	.9
Unknown chert	blade	5.1	1.8	.3	5.4
Unknown chert	core	4.5	2.9	1.3	25.1
Unknown chert	core	5.2	2.9	1.6	39.1
Unknown chert	bifacial preform	4.9	2.5	.6	7.3
Unknown chert	drill*	4.9	1.7/5	.9/3	4.5

\*Two measurements for width and thickness are given, one for the base and one for the tip.

cleaning, was shown to have a carefully chipped, rounded edge, with the other half unworked and jagged. The disk shows no evidence of breakage or fracture. The worked edge shows localized instances of polish, most likely from wear, indicating that the disk was utilitarian.

Lithics at the Olson site consisted of three flakes, one blade, one drill, two cores, and one bifacial preform, all made of at least three types of unknown but probably regional chert ranging in color from gray to nearly white (Table 2). The biface is of the type Jack's Reef Pentagonal unnotched (Justice 1987:215–217). In addition, two small sandstone abraders, one ground stone pendant, five slate disks, and one argillite disk were also present in the burial. Of these, the argillite disk, which does not show any obvious visible signs of shaping, polish, or wear, may have been incidental in the burial.

The sandstone abraders were small, the largest being 8.23 cm in length and the smaller 3.94 cm. The larger possessed an abraded surface along the length of one edge that left a nearly planar surface .5 cm wide and 4.5 cm long. The smaller possessed an abrasion channel .4 cm wide, .4 cm deep, and 2.1 cm long along the center of its length. The ground stone slate pendant, 5.7 cm by 3.55 cm by .9 cm, is unusual in that it is heavily battered and broken at one of its drill holes with the broken edge showing signs of extreme weathering from exposure and handling. It is very likely that this was either an object passed down from generation to generation or was found and reused from an earlier, possibly Archaic or Middle Woodland context. The five slate disks are similar to the one from the Brandon site, being round to oval in shape and ranging in length from 8.8 cm for the largest to 6.5 cm for the smaller (Figure 6). Each exhibited flaking or grinding



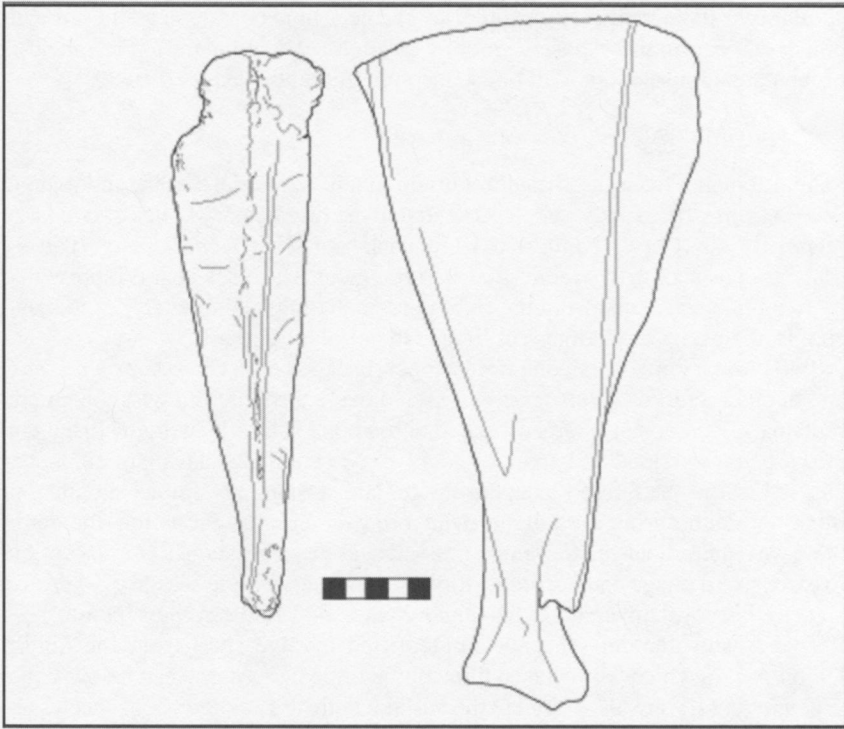
**Figure 6.** Slate disks from the Olson site, profiled with usewear marked, and the Brandon site (lower right).

around their circumference and all had one edge on which polish was evident.

#### *Modified Fauna*

One very informative artifact within the burial assemblage is the modified left scapula of an adult elk (*Cervus canadensis*). Wear patterns on the scapula suggest that modifications to the bone occurred in two stages altering the function of the tool. The first set of modifications include a series of regular, uniform notches on the ventral side of the distal end of the scapula, suggesting it had been hafted or mounted for use as a digging tool or hoe (Figure 7). Use wear is also evident on the proximal end of the bone that may be attributed to digging activities, such as





**Figure 7. Brandon site scapula tool with unmodified elk scapula for comparison.**

those associated with cultivation.

There is no physical evidence to indicate that the digging tool was ever damaged or broken. However, at some point the tool was extensively modified along its lateral edges for use as a scraper. These later modifications included the removal of the ridges along the cranial border and possibly the transverse spine (Figure 7). The modification of the cranial border is interpreted as secondary because digging tools made from scapulae generally require the thick, bony ridge on the cranial border for strength. The removal of this portion of the bone makes it unsuitable for use as a digging tool and therefore most likely was associated with later modification. Removal of the transverse spine, however, has no bearing on the effectiveness of the scapula as a digging tool. Patterns of wear along the entire caudal border of the scapula provide direct evidence for the use of the scapula as a scraping tool, possibly for hides.

At the Olson site, modified fauna include a deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) scapula hoe, a deer tibia beamer probably used in the processing of hides, and another beamer formed from an unidentifiable long bone fragment, also probably deer. The modified scapula exhibited a nearly identical reduction pattern, with the exception of the notching, to that of the Brandon site scapula, suggesting

similar two stage modification and use. The deer tibia beamer is well used with polish evident on the exposed edges of its length. The unidentified fragment is broken at its midsection, with polish also present on the exposed edges.

### *Unmodified Fauna*

Faunal remains from the Brandon burial contain terrestrial, avian, and aquatic species. Terrestrial species are represented in the fragmentary bones of two large mammals, elk (*Cervus canadensis*) and black bear (*Ursus americanus*). The elk remains consist of a right radius midshaft fragment. The black bear is represented by two bone fragments from the right ulna, including a completely fused distal end. Both species are indigenous to the Great Lakes region.

Two bird tarsometatarsi, one from a green-backed heron (*Butorides virescens*) and another a turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*), were also interred with the human remains at Brandon. The green-backed heron bone is fragile, with the distal end missing and proximal end approximately 75 percent intact. This particular species is local to the Great Lakes during the late spring and summer months but migrates south during the fall and winter. Preservation suggests that the heron bone was interred during the summer months, as these bird bones are susceptible to extensive damage and decomposition during even a single season of exposure (Janet Hinshaw, University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, pers. comm.).

Two freshwater mussels, one unidentified bivalve shell from the family Unionidae, in which were placed three of the lithic items described below, and a *Ligumia recta*, were also found in the burial feature at Brandon. Both species are distributed widely across eastern North America, including the Great Lakes and Ohio River drainage basins. These particular specimens most likely were procured from the nearby Huron River. The remaining 11 shells have not been definitively identified. The shells are elongated spirals, with eight whorls and an estimated average aperture-to-length ratio of 28 percent. These shells may represent the remains of either marine or lacustrine gastropods. Unfortunately, preservation precludes more precise identification and leaves open the question of whether or not these shells were imported into the Great Lakes or were procured locally. Because these shells, like the bivalves, demonstrate no evidence of perforation that would have allowed them to be strung for long-distance transport, attachment, or suspension, the interpretation of a local, freshwater species is favored.

An additional species of land snail shell, *Mesodon thyroides*, was also recovered from the Brandon site burial. This particular snail is a post-Pliocene species found across the United States from the Rocky Mountains to the eastern seaboard (Binney 1885:314–315). These shells have been determined to be intrusive in the burial due to the relatively high level of preservation and the presence of very young individuals in the population (Evans 1972:17–24). Young individuals were identified from shells recovered during floatation of 3 cubic liters of sediment from the burial feature. These shells range in size from 1 to 4 mm in diameter, in comparison to shells from fully matured individuals that average 2.3 cm. The wide age range represented by such shells indicates a living population in the burial pit rather than intentionally interred fauna.

Unmodified faunal remains from the Olson site include one turkey tarsometatarsus, one unidentified freshwater mussel shell, one beaver (*Castor canadensis*) incisor, one deer scapula, and three unidentifiable small bone fragments.

#### *Human Skeletal Remains*

For the Brandon site, the remains consist of a remarkably well-preserved skeleton of an adult female. Although fairly complete, several smaller bones and bone fragments were not recovered in the excavation and were apparently removed during earlier construction activities. Age estimates range between 30 and 45 years, with composite age data suggesting a more refined age estimate of 35–36 years. Stature is estimated to have been between 5'7" (170 cm) and 5'10" (178 cm) in height, and several stress-related pathologies in the cervical and thoracic vertebrae indicate a physically rigorous lifestyle. Pitting was observed on the dorsal face of the pubis, suggesting that this woman carried at least one pregnancy to term.

The dentition is generally consistent with that known for people following a general hunting and foraging subsistence strategy. Dental apical abscesses are present at the right maxillary first and second molars. Periosteal inflammation and moderate occlusal wear is found across the entire dental arcade. Most teeth also show signs of irregular occlusal flattening and secondary deposits of dentin, indicating wear through the tooth enamel. A wear pattern is noted on the occlusal surface of the left maxillary canine and first premolar, and the left mandibular canine and first and second premolars. An elongated depression runs parallel to the arcade, a wear pattern consistent with those observed among people regularly using their teeth as holding tools, such as when pulling sinew or in the manufacture of grass basketry (Larson 1997).

The cranium was subjected to some postmortem deformation and was fragmentary in situ, although most of the bone fragments were recovered, making reconstruction possible. Upon reconstruction a rounded, "pond"-type fracture pattern was noted at the right temporal-parietal aspect of the skull. This insult appears to be consistent with the type of injury produced by a blunt force trauma to the head with a rounded instrument such as a rock or club. The wound appears to have been the cause of death, indicating that this individual's life ended in a violent manner.

The Olson site remains consist of the moderately well preserved skeleton of an adult male. While also fairly complete, some of the long bones and several small bones of the hands and feet were not recovered from the site and are assumed to have been either overlooked in the original excavation or removed by the erosional processes that exposed the remains. Age estimates range from 54 to 78 years. No composite estimates are available. Stature estimates are also unavailable for this individual. Advanced age is very clearly marked by degenerative joint disease in both the right and left clavicular acromial joints, the right and left distal humeri, the right proximal radius, and the right proximal ulna, as well as periostitis of the right femur and fibula. Traumas suffered by this individual are

represented by a healed fracture of the right nasal bone and undefined trauma of the left humerus and right ulna.

The dentition is largely consistent with that known for people following a general hunting and foraging subsistence strategy. Extremely heavy wear along the teeth remaining in the jaw made it impossible to take metric measurements. A resorptive lesion is present along the right maxilla, and caries are present on all teeth. In addition, all teeth exhibited signs of extensive occlusal flattening with secondary deposits of dentin, indicating wear through the tooth enamel.

The quality of bone preservation and the completeness of the reconstruction of the skull enabled the collection of a full set of craniofacial measurements for both individuals. These measurements were compared via a discriminant function analysis (see Brace and Nelson 2001; Nelson 1998) with samples assembled on the basis of cluster analysis of a wide range of New World sites. Clusters used in this analysis were derived from Archaic, Woodland, Mississippian, Late Prehistoric, Protohistoric, and Historic-period populations of eastern North America, as well as Athabaskan and Puebloan populations. The posterior probabilities for Brandon and Olson resulting from the analysis are presented in Table 3.

Results of this analysis reveal affinities for the Brandon site with Northern Archaic populations, particularly to sites in northern New York state. This is a problematic affiliation in that the sites, based on excavation notes, are dated from the mid- to late Archaic (L. Saunders, personal communication 2003). However, there is additional data (Nelson 1998) to suggest that northern Archaic populations pushed into the southern Great Lakes region displacing central Archaic populations, with which the Brandon female also has affinities, south within the past 1,500 to 3,000 years. Potential cultural affiliations for the Brandon female would be Iroquoian, with a smaller likelihood for an Algonquian affiliation. For the Olson site, the results suggest affinities with populations of the northern Great Lakes and northern Plains populations of the Middle and Late Woodland and Historic periods. Cultural affiliations for the Olson male would be Algonquian based on affinities with a lower probability of a Siouan and even less for an Iroquoian relationship. The data from the Olson site is also significant in that it does not support arguments suggesting a consistent Iroquoian presence in southeastern Michigan since the beginning of the Late Woodland period (Stothers 1999:202). Implications of these relationships are discussed in detail in the following section.

**Table 3. Posterior Probabilities for the Brandon and Olson Sites.**

Site	Sex	<i>Centr Wood</i>	<i>Centr Arch</i>	<i>Missip</i>	<i>Pueblo</i>	<i>Athab</i>	<i>NE Wood</i>	<i>N Arch</i>	<i>Gr Lk/ Plains</i>
Brandon	F	.0597	.2075	.0050	.0022	.0032	.0015	<b>.6963</b>	.0146
Olson	M	.0156	.0003	.0002	.0003	.0002	.0045	.0520	<b>.9271</b>

## Discussion

### *Other Regional Sites*

The Brandon and Olson sites provide us with an unusual opportunity to expand existing interpretations of the nature of social organization in Early Late Woodland populations. In particular, the individuals interred at these sites may indicate a specific social role in early Late Woodland society. In contrast with Middle Woodland burials, particularly those of the Hopewell, the assemblages found with these people generally lack sumptuary items, with the exception of Upper Mercer chert at the Brandon site and the presence of the slate pendant at the Olson site. The general pattern of burial feature and assemblage is repeated at several sites in southeastern Michigan. In the immediate vicinity of Brandon and Olson, similar sites include two Early Late Woodland mound sites, Hinsdale Mounds 1 and 3 (Figure 1). The locations for the collections from these sites are unknown, but written newspaper accounts exist that describe them.

Hinsdale Mounds 1 and 3 have been discussed elsewhere (Halsey 1984), but a brief summary will be provided here. The newspaper account for Hinsdale Mound 1 described the burial of an adult male, presumably of middle-age based on onsite examination of the teeth (Halsey 1984:96), with whom were buried fragments of pottery, copper ornaments, slate, bone, chert projectile points, and the skeleton of a beaver. In addition, there were several antler items, including one antler harpoon. The same article described Hinsdale Mound 3 as containing the remains of a presumably young woman and infant that included items described as “bone implements of the primitive fisherman and hunter ... [and] ... common flint arrowheads and scrapers” (Halsey 1984:95). In addition to this were one pot capable of holding about a pint of fluid, a bone flute, several beads, two slate pendants, several animal bones, and pieces of deer antler. While some of the items in this burial are sumptuary, such as the beads and bone flute, the article described these items, including the small pot, as being placed with the infant rather than the adult female. This is not unusual since at other sites in southeastern Michigan sumptuary items are often included with infants rather than with adults in funerary populations of this time period (O’Shea 1987: 75).

In the larger region of southeastern and central Michigan, there are five additional sites that have burials with these particular status-marked individuals (Figure 1, Tables 4 and 5): the Bussinger (20SA194) and Bugai (20SA215) sites (Graves 1970; Halsey 1976), 20LP98 (Lovis 1979), and the Kiesling (20SE9) and Kilgore (20JA67) sites (Lovis and Sauer 1977).

The Bussinger site, located on a rise north of the Shiawassee River in Saginaw County was excavated in 1965 by members of the UMMA and several local amateurs. This was a multicomponent site with occupations and use ranging from the Archaic to the terminal Woodland. The primary function of the site during many of these time periods apparently was as a cemetery. Of 125 burials uncovered at the site, 17 were positively assigned to the Early Late Woodland. In the original study, Halsey suggested that these Early Late Woodland burials were



**Table 4. Bussinger and Bugai Sites: Status-Marked Burial Assemblages.**

Bussinger site		Bugai Site		
Burial 12 Male, adult (bundle)	Burial 47 Male, 35–40 yrs. (flexed)	Burial 118 Female, 20–30 yrs. (flexed)	Burial 8 Male, adult (rearticulated flexed)	Burial 12 Male, adult (skull only)
Ceramics	Ceramics	Ceramics	Ceramics	Ceramics
1 Wayne Ware vessel	3 Wayne Ware vessels	—	—	—
Lithics	Lithics	Lithics	Lithics	Lithics
5 projectile points (Upper Mercer; unknown)	3 projectile points (Bayport)	16 projectile points (Bayport)	10 projectile points (unknown cherts)	13 projectile points (2 Upper Mercer, 11 Bayport)
2 drills (Upper Mercer)	—	4 drills (Bayport)	—	1 drill (Bayport)
13 cache blades (unknown cherts)	28 cache blades (Bayport)	14 cache blades (Bayport)	6 cache blades (unknown cherts)	12 cache blades (1 Upper Mercer, 11 Bayport)
1 bifacial knife (Upper Mercer)	2 bifacial knives (Bayport)	—	—	—
—	—	—	4 retouched flakes (unknown cherts)	2 retouched flakes (unknown chert)
—	1 scraper (unknown chert)	5 scrapers (Bayport)	3 end scrapers (unknown cherts)	—
1 slate disk	—	2 slate disks	—	—
—	—	—	2 slate pendants (1 unfinished)	—
—	—	6 sandstone abraders	—	1 sandstone abradar
—	1 ground stone tool	1 ground stone tool	2 ground stone tools (schist, basalt)	1 ground stone adz
1 grinding stone (sandstone)	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	1 platform pipe (limestone)

Table 4. Continued.

Bussinger site		Bugai Site		
Burial 12 Male, adult (bundle)	Burial 47 Male, 35-40 yrs. (flexed)	Burial 118 Female, 20-30 yrs. (flexed)	Burial 8 Male, adult (rearticulated flexed)	Burial 12 Male, adult (skull only)
Unmodified fauna	Unmodified fauna	Unmodified fauna	Unmodified fauna	Unmodified fauna
2 beaver incisors	1 beaver incisor	—	3 beaver incisors	8 beaver incisors
—	—	4 antler tines	1 antler tine	—
3 antler pieces	4 antler pieces	3 antler pieces	—	2 antler fragments
—	11 deer long bone segments	—	—	—
—	1 bald eagle hum. (rt.)	—	—	1 deer metapodial
—	4 catfish jaws	—	—	—
Modified fauna	Modified fauna	Modified fauna	Modified fauna	Modified fauna
—	—	—	—	1 perforated antler w/beaver incisor
—	2 deer antler tine points	—	—	—
5 deer antler handles	1 elk antler handle	—	1 antler handle	7 antler handles
—	3 deer antler awls	—	—	—
2 antler harpoons	2 elk antler harpoons	2 antler harpoons	—	3 antler harpoons
—	—	—	1 turtle shell fragment	1 polished turtle plastron
1 drilled wolf mand. (rt.)	—	—	—	—
—	20 columella beads	—	—	—
—	130 anculosa beads	—	—	—
—	4 bone beads	—	—	—
Other	Other	Other	Other	Other
1 copper awl	1 copper awl	3 copper awls	1 antler hafted copper awl	—
Limonite	—	red ochre	red/yellow ochre	—
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
39	222	61	35	54

Note: adapted from Halsey, 1976; O'Shea, 1987; UMMA Site Files.

Table 5. 20LP98, Kiesling and Kilgore Sites: Status-Marked Burial Assemblages.

20LP98		Kiesling Site	Kilgore Site
<i>Burial Pit IV</i>	<i>Burial Pit V</i>		
<i>Male, adult (semiflexed)</i>	<i>Male, 20–30 (disarticulated)</i>	<i>Male, app. 20</i>	<i>Male, 25–40</i>
<i>Male, adult (bundle)</i>	<i>Male, 18–25 (disarticulated)</i>	<i>(no info available)</i>	<i>(no info available)</i>
<i>Child (skull only)</i>	<i>Female, 40+ (skull only)</i>		
Ceramics	Ceramics	Ceramics	Ceramics
2 Wayne Ware vessels (poss. from 1 vessel)	25 Shiawassee Ware sherds (may be incidental)	8 Wayne Ware sherds (poss. from 1 vessel)	8 Wayne Ware—like sherds
Lithics	Lithics	Lithics	Lithics
3 projectile points (Upper Mercer; Bayport; unknown)	—	—	1 projectile point (Bayport)
1 biface tip (unknown chert)	—	1 biface (Bayport)	—
1 end scraper (unknown chert)	—	—	1 knife (Flint Ridge, OH)
—	—	1 bifacial graver (unknown chert)	—
—	1 drill frag. (Bayport)	—	—
—	1 retouched flake (unknown chert)	—	—
6 flakes (unknown chert)	8 flakes (unknown chert)	—	—
1 flake (quartz)	1 flake (quartz)	—	—
5 slate disks	1 slate disk	—	—
1 slate whetstone	—	—	—
1 slate pendant	31 slate frag.	1 slate pendant	1 unfinished slate pendant
3 ground stone tools	—	—	2 ground stone tools
Unmodified fauna	Unmodified fauna	Unmodified fauna	1 sandstone abrader
1 antler tine	1 black bear cranium	—	Unmodified fauna
—	—	1 antler tine	—
2 beaver incisors	1 deer metacarpal frag.	—	—
—	1 beaver incisor	1 beaver incisor	—
—	—	1 raccoon baculum	—

Table 5. Continued.

20LP98		Kiesling Site	Kilgore Site
<i>Burial Pit IV</i>	<i>Burial Pit V</i>		
<i>Male, adult (semiflexed)</i>	<i>Male, 20–30 (disarticulated)</i>	<i>Male, app. 20</i>	<i>Male, 25–40</i>
<i>Male, adult (bundle)</i>	<i>Male, 18–25 (disarticulated)</i>	<i>(no info available)</i>	<i>(no info available)</i>
<i>Child (skull only)</i>	<i>Female, 40+ (skull only)</i>		
Unmodified fauna (cont.)	Unmodified fauna (cont.)	Unmodified fauna (cont.)	Unmodified fauna (cont.)
—	1 red-shouldered hawk	—	—
3 turkey frag. (lt. prox. humerus, rt. tibiotarsus, rt. tarsometatarsus shaft)	tarsometatarsus (lt. prox.)	2 turkey metatarsi (rt. and lt.)	1 turkey metatarsus (rt.)
1 elk scapula fragment	—	—	—
2 horned grebe bones (lt. ulna and lt. radius)	—	—	—
—	6 ossified bird tendons	—	—
—	5 bullfrog phalanges	—	—
3 unknown fish frag.	—	—	—
6 unknown mammal frag.	5 unknown mammal frag.	3 unknown mammal frag.	—
Modified fauna	Modified fauna	Modified fauna	Modified fauna
5 antler drifts	—	—	—
—	—	—	5 antler tine projectile points
1 antler pressure flaker	—	3 antler pressure flakers	—
1 bone projectile point	—	—	—
1 deer graver	—	—	—
14 columella beads	—	—	—
—	1 turkey metatarsus awl	—	—
—	1 bone pin or needle	—	—
—	1 black bear graver	—	—
Other	Other	Other	Other
limonite	—	—	—
Total 88	Total 91	Total 22	Total 20

Note: Adapted from Lovis et al. 1979 and Lovis and Sauer 1977.

clustered in three areas, except for one, Burial 102, suggesting the possibility of social divisions in the cemetery (Halsey 1976:437). Based on a subsequent reanalysis of the site this clustering was noted as possibly being “an artifact of post-depositional site formation processes” (O’Shea 1987: 74) such as later burial episodes at the site, rather than an intentional division. Three burials at this site fall into the category proposed for Brandon and Olson based on their funerary treatment (Table 4).

The Bugai site, located to the east of the Bussinger site along the Cass River in Saginaw County, was excavated in the early 1970s by UMMA and avocational archaeologists. These records were subsequently examined leading to the interpretation of the site as a single component Early Late Woodland cemetery with no evidence of occupation (Halsey 1976). Ten burials, two of which are relevant here (Table 4), and three nonmortuary features were identified. These nonmortuary features consisted of two fire pits with deposits of red ochre, one of which had a pipe placed along with the ochre, and a feature with a pottery concentration. No indication of any clustering of the burials comparable to that of Bussinger was noted at Bugai (Halsey 1976: 473–474).

20LP98, located in Lapeer County, was visited and partially excavated in 1977 by archaeologists from Michigan State University. Machine excavations for a house foundation had unearthed six burial features containing the remains of 14 individuals: eight adults, three subadults, and three infants. Two of these features are relevant here (Table 5). While no testing of the area surrounding the house foundation was undertaken, it was suggested that additional burials were likely to be present. The lack of evidence of occupation activities at the site further suggested that it functioned primarily as a cemetery (Lovis 1979:11).

The Kiesling site (Table 5), located in Shiawassee County, and the Kilgore site (Table 5), located in Jackson County, were visited in 1976 and 1972, respectively, also by archaeologists from Michigan State University. Machine excavations had brought up the remains and associated grave goods of a male, approximately 20 years in age, at the Kiesling site. Subsequent inspection of this site revealed no other prehistoric deposits, either disturbed or *in situ*, suggesting that this was an isolated burial (Lovis and Sauer 1977:15). Excavation for a septic tank at the Kilgore site had disturbed the remains of a male, 25–40 years in age, with associated grave goods. It is unknown whether this was an isolated burial or not. As an additional note, neither site was examined or excavated in its primary context.

### *Marking Status in the Early Late Woodland*

The burials and associated assemblages presented in Tables 1, 4, and 5 are unique in that no other documented burials in the region, either individual or multiple, possess comparable types and quantities of artifacts. As a result, it seems reasonable to suggest that the people in these burials potentially possessed a social role that was formalized within Early Late Woodland communities. Each, with some minor variation, has an apparently prescribed set of funerary items. Given that no child burials could be found with anything comparable, the posi-



tion was likely one that was achieved. Given that men and women are both found with these generally comparable assemblages, this potential social role was also open to both sexes. The nature of the artifact assemblages, with their general lack of sumptuary items and emphasis on the utilitarian, is interesting in that it suggests some aspect of the nature of the social role that the person may have held. In this case it could have been one associated with leadership in daily community affairs.

Other elements in the burial assemblages present a somewhat more difficult problem for interpretation. With the exception of the individuals at Bugai and Bussinger, the remaining burials include bird metatarsi, mainly turkey, in both modified and unmodified forms. Birds in general were and remain strong symbols of spiritual power among most Native American tribes. Among groups in the Plains and Great Lakes, their feathers, skin or feet were often included in personal charms (Hilger 1951:45; Tooker 1964:121) or bundles (Sidoff 1977) and typically represented spirit helpers encountered in dreams. Other birds had more general symbolic meanings, including those related to themes such as war and peace (Densmore 1929; Fenton 1953) or for clan totems. Among the Ojibwa, for example, there were several bird totems including the crane, loon, eagle, black duck, goose, and hawk (Warren 1885:44–45). In terms of the turkey, there is little historical evidence for its presence other than as a food source in Great Lakes regional cultures except among Iroquoians, who were documented as using the wings in curing and other healing ceremonials (Tooker 1964:103). Regarding corporate totems, the Delaware Indians of Pennsylvania were the only ones in the region that had a turkey clan (Heckewelder 1971).

Aside from the lack of ethnohistoric evidence, the presence of turkey metatarsi in several of these burials is suggestive. Their absence at Bussinger and Bugai, the two northern sites in the study area with the largest overall funerary populations, is curious. It could simply be evidence of local variation in the social role, with the “southerners” having turkeys as some form of symbolic marker and the “northerners” lacking them. They could also be representative of affiliation with another social role in addition to the one marked by the rest of the burial assemblage: the “turkey club.” It is even possible that this was some form of clan marker, but it is unlikely given the nature of the society at the time.

In regards to who had access to this social role, O’Shea’s earlier analysis of Bussinger can be applied here in that, “although adult age may have been a prerequisite for the status position, it was open to individuals of either sex” (O’Shea 1987:75). Furthermore, while this position was apparently one gained through achievement, the general regularity of the burial assemblage indicates that it was also one that was formally recognized (O’Shea 1987:75). As such, it is likely that these people belonged to a class of individuals that possessed certain rights and responsibilities in Early Late Woodland culture. How such a role would develop is a matter of speculation. The presence of such a social role suggests a relatively stable regional social structure. Assuming these individuals were members in some broadly recognized society, then the level of social cohesion at this time is potentially much greater than would be expected for people who

were essentially subsisting as semisedentary hunter-gatherers.

Historically, there is no obvious comparable social development in the region among the two major cultural groups that would most likely have descended from these Early Late Woodland peoples: the Algonquians and Iroquoians. Among Algonquian groups, comprising the Ojibwa, Odawa, Potawatami, Miami, Sac, and Mesquakie, there were a variety of achieved, formally recognized social roles related to aspects of religious practice (Densmore 1929; Schoolcraft 1851). Most of these roles had specific expectations associated with them, and they were generally mutually exclusive. However, these roles are not those that we have already proposed for the Early Late Woodland individuals. None of the predominantly male religious practitioners documented for Algonquian communities had strong ties to the governing of everyday affairs, and they were often drawn on only as circumstances necessitated. The same can be said for Algonquian political leaders. Leadership roles among most Algonquian societies were initially ephemeral in nature and people, typically men, rose to these positions as times required (Cleland 1992:60). However, there was no leadership class among these groups, as we would suggest for the Early Late Woodland.

In contrast, Iroquoian society, historically composed of the Huron/Wendat, Erie, Neutral and Five Nations, did possess a comparable leadership role. Among the Five Nations or League of the Iroquois, the *sachem* was a formally recognized social role (Morgan 1851), which was an elected position and, more significantly, limited to men. Iroquoians generally highlighted the complementarity and mutual exclusivity of social roles between men and women. Among the Five Nations, there was a general balance of power among men and women, with the women holding the land and electing *sachems* and the men protecting the land and making political decisions for the League (Brown 1975). Among western Iroquoian groups like the Huron and Neutral, this balance was not quite as even, with men holding a greater balance of the power in society, but the pattern remained essentially the same in regards to decision making (Tooker 1964; Trigger 1990). Among the Algonquians a similar pattern existed, but women could assume roles typically held by men such as hunters, warriors, and religious practitioners through the pursuit of spiritual power obtained through dreams (Vecsey 1983:124–125, 161–162).

There is cause from the archaeological evidence to suggest that women did not have comparable access to the social role we have identified for the Early Late Woodland. In each case where a woman was buried there was something unusual in the nature of the burial, typically in the form of some demonstrable increase in effort in the funerary program. For the woman buried at the Brandon Site, the construction of a stone-lined burial chamber is not matched by any of the male burials in our sample or by any other documented burial in Michigan. While excluded from our assemblage comparison, the burial of the woman and infant at Hinsdale Mound 3 is arguably significant as it was documented as being more than twice as large as its contemporaneous adult male-containing neighbor, Hinsdale Mound 1 (Halsey 1984:92, 95–96). The woman buried at Bussinger also has an unusual aspect to it, although it is somewhat less convincing. There

is no obvious difference in the method of interment, but there are differences in the artifact assemblage. In every shared class of artifact type, except for cache blades, the quantity of items matches or exceeds those in the male burials (Table 4). While a poor indicator of overall energy expenditure in the burial, particularly in comparison to the male in Burial 47, it is of interest to note that the woman was both younger than the man in Burial 47 and possessed larger quantities of utilitarian artifacts. Burial Pit V at 20LP98 is intentionally being left out of this discussion due to the impossibility of determining associations between the artifacts and specific individuals within the burial feature.

In discussing the gender implications of this social role, there are two final observations to make. The first is the absence of pots from the burials of the women at Brandon and Bussinger, and the placement of the pot at Hinsdale Mound 3 with the infant rather than the woman. This is unusual since pottery is one of the items typically found in both male and female burials outside of our status marked individuals (Halsey 1976). The second observation is the absence of beaver incisors. Both absences are striking, but for different reasons. The absence of pots, while difficult to assess with a sample of three individuals, is conspicuous in that these items are normally associated with women's roles. Furthermore, all of the men's burials, except for those at Bugai, have them. The beaver incisors, on the other hand, are all exclusively associated with the status-marked men at the Bussinger, Bugai, and 20LP98 cemeteries and also with the Olson and Kiesling burials. No other men or women have them.

What the above patterns of artifacts and demographics suggest is that this role was associated primarily with men. In achieving this role, men obtained the apparently symbolically significant beaver incisors and, upon death, were buried with these items along with a representative array of tool classes available at the time. The Kiesling and Kilgore burials may be considered a moderate exception to this rule because of the nature of their discovery. Women could achieve this role, but they did not achieve the same symbolic markers as men since they did not get beaver incisors. In other words, by assuming this role these women were not recognized as men. At the same time, these women also may have lost their status as women, which the absence of pots might suggest. However, upon death, women achieved some form of greater recognition in their burial, either through method of interment or differences in artifact assemblage composition.

## Conclusions

In summary, we have come somewhat full circle from our initial comment on how tantalizing a bit of suggestive information can be. In this case, the data present in our small sample suggest that a specialized role existed in the Early Late Woodland communities of southeastern Michigan. The role was probably a community leadership role of some sort that was achieved by adult individuals of either sex. However, it seems likely that women had differential access to this role that required unusual circumstances for them to achieve it. Assuming the beaver incisors were given to the individuals as a symbolic marker during their

life, women in this role were clearly separated from the men who held the same position. In death, the funerary treatment reflected the rarity of a woman in this role by some form of emphasis in the funerary treatment.

Our review of the relevant ethnohistoric data on Algonquian and Iroquoian social organization provided little explanation for the nature and ancestry of the social role found in this Early Late Woodland context. Both societies in the region historically have traits that are represented by this role. Algonquian social structure provides the best fit with its flexibility for women to access typically masculine social roles. However, this flexibility and lack of any formally recognized social class defined by the community does not allow for the existence of such a role. Iroquoian society provides this, but its fairly rigid exclusion of women from communal leadership roles is problematic. In regards to exact cultural affiliation, Stothers (1999) has argued that an Iroquoian affiliation is likely for this time period on the basis of material culture similarities with contemporaneous cultures to the east. In addition, Cleland (1992) has argued that the historically documented social organization of Iroquoian groups was most likely an adaptation to the sedentary farming system they adopted upon the introduction of corn into the Great Lakes and Northeast. Prior to this, Iroquoians were probably socially indistinguishable from Algonquian groups.

In contrast, the biological information derived from craniometric analyses of the Brandon and Olson skulls as well as others in the region during this time period are suggestive of another explanation. While the analysis of the women from the Brandon site suggests an affiliation with eastern groups, possibly Iroquoian, the man from the Olson site is of local, possibly Algonquian, origin. A larger craniometric study done for this time period in Michigan by Baxter and Nelson suggests that women were moving into the region from the Eastern Woodlands, including Ontario and Ohio, during the Early Late Woodland period, whereas men were coming from the temporally contiguous local population (Baxter and Nelson 1998:9). This is suggestive of a patrilocal, exogamous marriage pattern consistent with documented historic Algonquian practices in the region. However, the local population could be Iroquoian as well, since biology is not always an indicator of culture, particularly if Cleland's assertion is correct.

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