

**ELENA SESMA**

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University of Kentucky  
Department of Anthropology  
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**RESEARCH INTERESTS**

Historical and contemporary archaeology; Community based and public archaeology; feminist anthropology; African Diaspora archaeology; Black Feminist Theory; critical heritage studies; memory studies; intersectionality of race, class, gender; literary perspectives in anthropology

**EDUCATION**

- 2019 Ph.D University of Massachusetts Amherst, Anthropology. PhD, "The Political Work of Memory in Collaborative Caribbean Archaeology."
- 2014 M.A. University of Massachusetts Amherst, Anthropology. M.A., "Creating Mindful Heritage Narratives: Black Women in Slavery and Freedom"
- 2011 B.A. University of Maryland, College Park, *Cum Laude* in Anthropology and Women's Studies. Honors Humanities, University Honors.

**ACADEMIC POSITIONS**

- 2020 Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology. University of Kentucky.
- 2019 University of California President's Postdoctoral Fellow, Anthropology Department, University of California, Berkeley

**EXTERNAL RESEARCH GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS**

- 2018b "Living Memory and Changing Landscapes in Eleuthera, Bahamas: Developing a Community-Based Archive." Wenner-Gren Engaged Anthropology Grant, The Wenner-Gren Foundation (\$4,675).
- 2018 "Archival & museum-based research on transatlantic slavery in British colonies." Cultural Heritage of European Societies & Spaces (CHESS) Program, National Science Foundation (NSF IIA-1261172), University of Massachusetts Department of Anthropology. (\$5,000)
- 2015 "The Political Work of Memory in Collaborative Caribbean Archaeology." Wenner-Gren Dissertation Fieldwork Grant, The Wenner-Gren Foundation (\$19,850 for budgeted fieldwork expenses). Grant No. 9024.
- 2013 Graduate Research Fellowship (\$32,000/year, 3 years). National Science Foundation. Grant No. 1451512.

**INTERNAL GRANTS**

- 2018 Dissertation Writing Fellowship. Department of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts Amherst. (\$10,000)
- 2016 Graduate School Dissertation Research Grant, University of Massachusetts Amherst. (\$1000 for budgeted research expenses)
- 2015 Pre-dissertation Research Grant, Department of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts Amherst. (\$3,000 for budgeted research expenses)

## Publications

### PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

- 2020 *Under review*. Materializing Memory and Building Community: A Contemporary Archaeology of the Bahamas. *Archaeology Papers of the American Anthropological Association*.
- 2020 *Under review*. Evan Taylor and Elena Sesma. Exploring the Contemporary in Old Places. *Archaeology Papers of the American Anthropological Association*. Eds, Elena Sesma and Evan Taylor.
- 2020 *In Press*. Photo elicitation as a tool for expanded participation in community archaeology. *Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage*.
- 2016 Creating Mindful Heritage Narratives: Black Women in Slavery and Freedom. *Journal of African Diaspora Archaeology and Heritage* 5(1):38-61.
- 2015 'A Web of Community': Uncovering African American Historic Sites in Deerfield, MA. *Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage* 2(2): 121-136.

### PEER-REVIEWED BOOK CHAPTERS

- 2020 *Under review*. Balancing expectations and obligations: Finding your way in community-based archaeology. *The Community-Based PhD: Complexities, Triumphs, Missteps, and Joys of Community-based & Participatory Action Research as Graduate Students*. Eds, Sonya Atalay and Alexandra McCleary. University of Arizona Press.

### PEER-REVIEWED EDITED VOLUMES

- 2020 *Under review*. Contemporary Archaeologies of Old Places. *Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association*. Eds, Elena Sesma and Evan Taylor.

### NON-PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS - BLOGS

- 2019 Sesma, Elena. Engaged Anthropology Grant: Elena Sesma. The Wenner-Gren Blog. July 8, 2019. <[http://blog.wennergren.org/2019/07/eag\\_esesma/](http://blog.wennergren.org/2019/07/eag_esesma/)>
- 2018 Sesma, Elena and Evan Taylor. Community Archaeology, Outreach, and the Old City. Tel Akko Field School Expert Blog. July 27, 2018. <<http://www.telakko.com/2018/07/27/community-archaeology-outreach-old-city/>>

### CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2020 *Submitted, cancelled due to COVID-19*. "Community heritage, tourism, and land rights: Reorienting the archaeologist in collaborative research." Organized session, Collaborative Responsibilities: Broadening the definition of expertise (by Kasey Diserens Morgan and Tiffany C. Cain). Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association.
- 2020 "Contemporary Landscape Archaeology and Memory in the Bahamas." University of California President's and Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellowship Programs Virtual Academic Retreat. April 2020, virtual due to COVID-19.
- 2019 "Mapping place and materializing memory: Contemporary, collaborative archaeology in the Bahamas." Society for American Archaeology Annual Conference, Albuquerque, NM. Poster.

- 2018b “Materializing Memory and Building Community: A Contemporary Archaeology of the Bahamas.” In organized session, “Contemporary Archaeologies of Old Places: Material Politics Between Past and Future,” organized by Evan Taylor and Elena Sesma. 115<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Jose, CA.
- 2018 “Community-Based Archaeology in the Bahamas: Linking Landscape and Memory.” In organized session, “Memory in Community Based Archaeology”, organized by Marc Lorenc and Elena Sesma. Society for Historical Archaeology Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA. January 2018.
- 2017 “‘This place is home, this place is everything’: Community-based archaeology and memory in the Bahamas.” In organized session, “Collaborative, Public, and Political: Archaeology in 2017 and Beyond”, organized by Elena Sesma. 114<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Minneapolis, MN. December 2017.
- 2016c "Discovering Home in the Bahamas: Community-Based, Participatory Approaches to Memory." In organized session, "Accidents and Discoveries in CBPR: Perspectives from early career anthropologists", organized by Elena Sesma and Marc Lorenc. 113<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting American Anthropological Association, Minneapolis, MN. November 2016.
- 2016b Sarah Hutton, Carol Will, Vanesa Giraldo, Elena Sesma. "Safety and Belonging in the Academic Library: Leveraging Interdepartmental Partnerships and Using Ethnographic Research to Discuss Racism, Exclusion and Student Identity." Association of College and Research Libraries, New England Annual Conference, Manchester, NH. May 2016.
- 2016a "Back to the Soil": Community Archaeology and Heritage Tourism in Eleuthera, Bahamas. Co-authored poster, Whitney Battle-Baptiste, Elizabeth Chilton and Elena Sesma. Society for American Archaeology Annual Conference, Orlando, FL. April 2016.
- 2015 "African American Heritage on the Deerfield Landscape." In organized session, "Navigating the Cultural Landscape: Interpretive Trails as Heritage Practice," organized by Erica Kowsz. Cultural Landscapes and Heritage Values Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst Center for Heritage and Society, Amherst, MA. May 2015.
- 2014f "Putting Millars Back on the Map: Community Memory on a Fading Landscape in the Bahamas." Co-authored paper, Whitney Battle-Baptiste, Honora Sullivan-Chin, and Elena Sesma. In organized session, "New Perspectives on Afro-Caribbean Heritage," organized by Zachary Beier, Steve Lenik. 111<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, DC. December 2014.
- 2014e "Mindful Narratives of Slavery and Freedom in New England." In, "Producing Western Massachusetts: African American Life Along Western Massachusetts' Color Line," organized by Linda Ziegenbein, Robert Paynter. 111<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, DC. December 2014.
- 2014d "Black Women in Slavery and Freedom: Mindful Narratives of Emancipation in New England." New England American Studies Association, Bristol, RI. October 2014.
- 2014c "Heritage Tourism in the Bahamas: A Case Study of Economic Well-being." Heritage & Healthy Societies Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst Center for Heritage and Society, Amherst, MA. May 2014.

- 2014b "Complicating the Captive African History of Western New England." Presented at The Graduate History Association's 10th Annual Conference. Amherst, MA. March 2014.
- 2014a "The Search for Lucy: Uncovering the Captive African History of Western New England." Presented at the 47th Annual Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, Quebec City, Canada. January 2014.
- 2013b "Contested Heritage in Western Massachusetts: A Case Study At The W.E.B. Du Bois Homesite and Historic Deerfield." Co-authored paper, Honora X. Sullivan-Chin and Elena Sesma. Presented at the 112th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Chicago, IL. November 2013.
- 2013a "Radical Heritage Archaeology: A Case Study from the W.E.B. Du Bois Homesite in Great Barrington, Massachusetts" Co-authored paper, Whitney Battle-Baptiste, Robert Paynter, Christopher Douyard, Elena Sesma, Anthony Martin, Honora Sullivan-Chin. Presented at the 46th Annual Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, University of Leicester, Leicester, UK. January 2013.

#### **ORGANIZED CONFERENCE SESSIONS**

- 2018 "Contemporary Archaeologies of Old Places: Material Politics Between Past and Future." Co-organizers Evan Taylor and Elena Sesma. American Anthropological Association, San Jose, CA. November 2018.
- 2018 "Memory in Community Based Archaeology." Co-organizers, Marc Lorenc and Elena Sesma. Society for Historical Archaeology, New Orleans, LA. January 2018.
- 2017 "Collaborative, Public, and Political: Archaeology in 2017 and Beyond." American Anthropological Association, Washington, DC. December 2017.
- 2016 "Accidents and Discoveries in CBPR: Perspectives from early career anthropologists." Co-organizers, Elena Sesma and Marc Lorenc. American Anthropological Association, Minneapolis, MN. November 2016.

#### **INVITED TALKS**

- 2020 "Material Memoriscapes of Slavery and Freedom in the Bahamas." University of California Merced, Department of Anthropology, March 4, 2020.
- 2020 "Contemporary Landscape Archaeology in the Bahamas." University of California Berkeley, Archaeological Research Facility, February 5, 2020.
- 2019 "Materializing Memory: Contemporary Landscape Archaeology of a 19<sup>th</sup> Century Bahamian Plantation." University of California Los Angeles, Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, October 23, 2019.
- 2018 "Community Archaeology," with Evan Taylor. Lecture for the Tel Akko Total Archaeology Field School (Acre, Israel), July 2018.
- 2017 "Community Archaeology," with Evan Taylor. Lecture for the Tel Akko Total Archaeology Field School (Acre, Israel), July 2017.

#### **AWARDS & HONORS**

- 2018 Graduate Student Travel Award, Department of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts Amherst. To attend the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Jose, CA.

- 2018 Nathalie F.S. Woodbury Distinguished Service Award, Department of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
- 2017 Student Membership Award, Archaeology Division of the American Anthropological Association
- 2017 Graduate Student Travel Award, Department of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts Amherst. To attend the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, DC.
- 2016 Graduate Student Travel Award, Department of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts Amherst. To attend the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Minneapolis, MN.
- 2014 Woodbury Award, Department of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts Amherst. For presenting "The Search for Lucy: Uncovering the Captive African History of Western New England" at the 47th Annual Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, Quebec City, Canada.
- 2013 Harriet Tubman Student Travel Award. Gender Minority Affairs Committee, Society for Historical Archaeology.
- 2007 Banneker/Key Full Scholarship. University of Maryland, College Park, Honors College.

#### **ARCHAEOLOGY EXPERIENCE**

- 2018 Community Archaeology Specialist and Co-Leader of Youth Outreach Program. Tel Akko Total Archaeology Project. Acre, Israel. July 2018
- 2017 Community Archaeology Specialist and Co-Leader of Youth Outreach Program. Tel Akko Total Archaeology Project. Acre, Israel. July-August 2017
- 2015 Project Archaeologist, Digging Northampton's History: A Community Archaeology Project. Historic Northampton. Northampton, MA.
- 2014 Fort Charles Archaeology Project. Project run through Monmouth University, Dr. Edward Gonzalez-Tenant. St. Kitts and Nevis.
- 2013 Research Assistant, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Dr. Whitney Battle-Baptiste, Faculty Research Grant. "Back to the Soil": Memory Mapping at Millars Plantation on the Island of Eleuthera, Bahamas.
- 2012 Teaching Assistant, Summer Field School in Heritage Archaeology, University of Massachusetts Amherst. Great Barrington, MA; Deerfield, MA.
- 2011 Field Technician. Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, Edgewater, MD.
- 2010 Laboratory Volunteer. Archaeology in Annapolis Lab, University of Maryland. College Park, MD.
- 2010 Laboratory Technician. Maryland State Highways Administration, Archaeology Lab.
- 2010 Field Technician. Archaeology in Annapolis. Wye House, Easton, MD.
- 2010 Field School Student. Archaeology in Annapolis Field School, University of Maryland.

#### **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

- 2015 Researcher, Library Ethnography in the W.E.B. Du Bois Library, under the direction of Dr. Krista Harper. Amherst, MA.
- 2013 Consultant, Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, with funding from the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Partnership in Scholarship Grant. Deerfield, MA.

- 2010 Research Intern, Feminist Majority Foundation, Educational Equity Program.  
Arlington, VA.

## REPORTS

- 2013c "The potential of a Center for the Study of African Americans in Rural New England." Report submitted to the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, Deerfield, MA. Funded by Partnership in Scholarship Grant, The National Trust for Historic Preservation
- 2013b "Searching for the Princes: The Location of the Prince Family Home." Report to the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, Deerfield, MA.
- 2013a 2012 Summer Field School in Heritage Archaeology Final Report. Report to the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, Deerfield, MA.
- 2011 Klein, S., & Sesma, E. "What are we learning from the 2006–7 Office for Civil Rights survey question about public schools with single-sex academic classes? An Exploratory Study." Feminist Majority Foundation, Arlington, VA.

## COMMUNITY REPORTS

- 2018b "Memory and History in South Eleuthera." Report prepared for community partners and research participants, Eleuthera, Bahamas. Submitted to University of Massachusetts Amherst Scholarworks, September 2018. < <https://doi.org/10.7275/z08z-1g12>>
- 2018a "Getting to Know the Old City and Tel Akko." Tel Akko Community Archaeology Program, Compiled by Evan Taylor and Elena Sesma. Google Tourbuilder. July 2018. < <https://goo.gl/Urrz6f>>

## INVITED PEER REVIEWER

- 2020 Encyclopedia of Global Archaeology
- 2018 Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology and Heritage Studies
- 2016 Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage

## COLLECTIONS EXPERIENCE

- 2017- Archaeology Lab Coordinator, UMass Department of Anthropology
- 2018
- 2017 Certificate, Archaeological Curation and Collections Management Webinar. Society for American Archaeology.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### University of Kentucky

Public Archaeology

Fall 2020

### University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Department of Anthropology

#### Primary Instructor

Human Nature, Online Instructor.

Winter 2016, Summer 2017,  
Summer 2018, Spring 2019

#### Teaching Assistant

University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Department of Anthropology.

Gender in Hip Hop Culture (ANTH224)

Fall 2017

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Problems in Anthropology/Junior Year Writing (ANTH364) | Spring 2017            |
| Ancient Civilizations (ANTH150)                        | Fall 2016              |
| Culture Through Film (ANTH106)                         | Spring 2013            |
| Human Nature (ANTH100)                                 | Fall 2012              |
| Archaeology and Prehistory (ANTH102)                   | Fall 2011, Spring 2012 |
| Summer Field School in Heritage Archaeology            | Summer 2012            |

### **Administrative Experience**

|      |  |
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| 2018 | Department Assistant, Curriculum assessment and general education proposals  |
| 2018 | Department Assistant, Academic Quality Assessment and Development Self-Study |

### **SERVICE**

#### **Department of Anthropology, University of Kentucky**

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| 2020 | Archaeology Development Committee |
| 2020 | Diversity Committee               |

#### **Department of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts Amherst**

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| 2017      | Organizer, Archaeology Brown Bag Association                                      |
| 2017      | Collections Committee   |
| 2014-2015 | Organizer, Engaged Anthropology Brown Bag Series, Transformative Anthropology Lab |
| 2014-2015 | Woodbury Committee  |
| 2014-2016 | Communications Coordinator, Graduate Student Caucus                               |
| 2014      | Hiring Committee  |
| 2013-2014 | Communications Committee, Graduate Student Caucus                                 |
| 2012-2013 | Vice-chair, Graduate Student Caucus.  |

#### **University of Massachusetts Amherst**

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|------|---|
| 2019 | Workshop facilitator, Graduate Student CV workshop, Broader Impacts Resource Fair, Office of Professional Development   |
| 2017 | Organizer, Outreach and Public Engagement Summit through the Graduate School and the Office of Professional Development |

### **Community Service**

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|-----------|--|
| 2016-2019 | Troop Leader, Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts |
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### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

American Anthropological Association  
Society for Historical Archaeology  
Association for Critical Heritage Studies  
Society for American Archaeology

## **RESEARCH SKILLS**

- Archaeological skills including standard excavation methods, artifact processing and analysis, Total Station, pedestrian survey, archaeological photography.
- Ethnographic skills in semi-structured and unstructured interviews, oral history, focus group facilitation, participant observation; archaeological ethnography.
- Skills in public and engaged archaeology include youth outreach activities, event planning, public speaking, and writing for the public.
- Archival research and analysis of British and American colonial-era and antebellum records.
- Software proficiency in MAXQDA, NVivo, Microsoft Office Suite, Photos, Google Tourbuilder, Google Earth.

## **LANGUAGES**

English (Fluent)

Spanish (Intermediate written/spoken)

French (Intermediate written, beginner spoken)