

URF Project Timeline

Beginning in August, I will be traveling out to the Skiles land in the Lower Pecos. In this trip, there will be a determination and initial analysis of the railroad feature. I will also learn more about the history of the railroad and the land from the Skiles family and make an initial inventory of the artifacts in their collection. By early September, I will get the reconstruction (ArcGIS) equipment from the Anthropology department and be trained in its use. In addition, I will have completed the background research, gathered the initial ideas about the collection, and identified the labor group using the maker's marks. At the end of September, I will have traveled to the Skiles land to gather the data for the digital reconstruction – using ArcGis – and get any additional information from the site and the collection. After this, I will have all of the data needed to complete the reconstruction and analysis. By October 20th, the initial digital reconstruction will be complete. November 1st will be the deadline for the draft of analysis and written portion completed. By November 20th, the final product for the reconstruction will be done. My thesis will be presented at the Honors Thesis Forum at the end of the fall semester. I also plan on presenting my work at the Anthropology Research Conference in the spring. Dr. Kilby and I have also discussed trying to get my work published in the Journal of Texas Archaeology and History.

URF Project Proposal

This thesis project will focus on the archaeology and history of the Southern Pacific Railroad, part of the Transcontinental Railroad. Specifically, it will focus on one part of the railroad, near Langtry Texas, and the groups of laborers that constructed it. Construction on the Southern Pacific Railroad began in 1873, with the labor groups being divided up ethnically between Chinese immigrants and European laborers. On the Southern Pacific Railroad, it was Chinese workers that made up the majority of the workforce (Voss 2015:12). The conditions on the railroad were strenuous and dangerous, for all workers. There have been previous archaeological investigations of sites within the Southern Pacific Railroad, but most of the investigations have centered around campsites and daily lives within the camps. Up until quite recently, the contributions of Chinese laborers on the railroad had been largely ignored. However, Stanford University established the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project (CRWNAP), which has a large online database of academic papers, oral history interviews, information about previous investigations, and pictures and information about archaeological artifacts associated with Chinese laborers of the Transcontinental Railroad. This is a huge resource for background literature about the railroad and the history of workers.

For my project, I want to focus on reconstructing a site of labor and using that data to inform on working class conditions of the time. I want to approach the project through transnational and industrial capitalist lenses. The creation of the railroad and the use of immigrant labor are intertwined with the diaspora of the American West and the rise of industrial capitalist society, two approaches that have potential with understanding the historical archaeologies of the American West (Dixon 2014). These are the specific research questions I want to answer: How can we establish what labor group worked on a specific part of the

railroad? How can reconstructing the site and looking at artifacts inform on working conditions and its ties with immigration, transportation, ethnicity, and class? By being informed on what working group built the bridge abutment, I will be able to add further context and understanding as to how ethnicity and immigration intersects with the rights of the working class and their treatment.

To accomplish this, I will be taking one of the railroad features (a bridge abutment that has already been surveyed) on a specific piece of land which is owned by the Skiles family of the Lower Pecos and creating a digital reconstruction through ArcGis and other online programs to establish what the site looked like during its reconstruction. I will be using the maker's marks left behind on the feature to establish which laboring grouping worked on this specific part of the railroad. In addition to this, I will be using the artifact collection – which the Skiles family have found and established over the years – to help support the image of daily life. By capturing what a site of labor looks like, especially if we can determine what ethnic group worked on it, we can gain more understanding about working class conditions, and immigration ideas. The overall final product will be an accessible, creative online presentation of the digital reconstruction and the analysis of working conditions. By blending archaeological research and strategies with historical analysis, I will be able to provide understanding and context to the history of the area and add to a greater understanding of working conditions on the railroad and the American West. Personally, this project will not only allow me to graduate with honors, but it will give me critical experience in data collection, analysis, reconstruction, and academic writing. By being able to complete a research project – from fieldwork to presenting at a conference – I will be prepared for a graduate program in archaeology and a career in research.

Dixon, Kelly J.

2014 Historical Archaeologies of the American West. *Journal of Archaeological Research* 22:177-228.

Voss, Barbara L.

2015 The Historical Experience of Labor: Archaeological Contributions to Interdisciplinary Research on Chinese Railroad Workers. In *The Archaeology of Chinese Railroad Workers in North America*, Barbara L. Voss, guest editor. Thematic issue, *Historical Archaeology* 49(1):4-23.

URF Budget Narrative

The majority of my budget will contribute to travel expenses to the Lower Pecos, in order to gather the data needed for the construction. Langtry, Texas -- where the land is located -- is 263 miles from San Marcos. Factoring \$.585 of gas per mile and two round trips, I would need \$615.42 for gasoline. The Skiles family, who own the land I will be working on, have been kind enough to invite me to stay in their guest house whenever I travel out there, so I will not need any funds to contribute to lodging. However, I estimate I will need 59 dollars a day for food and any other living expenses, which for six total days will add \$354 to the overall budget. This brings my overall budget to \$969.42.

Need	Per Diem/Rates	Time	Miles	Amount
Gas	\$.585 per mile	2 round trips	263	\$615.42
Meals and Incidentals	\$59 per day	6 days		\$354

https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates/per-diem-rates-results/?action=perdiems_report&state=TX&fiscal_year=2022&zip=&city=Langtry

<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/transportation-airfare-pov-etc/privately-owned-vehicle-pov-mileage-reimbursement-rates>

Education

Overall GPA: 3.96

Expected 2023 B.A.I.S in International Studies with a European Studies Concentration and a minor in Art History
Texas State University
GPA: 4.00

Expected 2023 B.A. in Anthropology with a focus in Archaeology and a minor in History
Texas State University
GPA: 3.86

Experience

January 2020 - Present Undergraduate Research Assistant

Texas State University Department of History

- Translated and summarized French articles from online archive of newspaper *Le Monde*.
- Examined cultural shifts of the public perception of the AIDS epidemic in France throughout time.
- Archived and organized articles chronologically to be compiled into overarching data and graphs.

Fall 2021 Collections, Curation and Processing Intern

Texas Historical Commission, Archaeology Lab

- Prepared archaeological, archival, and historic collections for loan, conservation, transport, and long-term curation.
- Researched artifacts and curatorial methods to develop online databases.
- Digitized and contextualized records associated with archaeological excavations and conservation of materials.
- Created social media postings in reference to collections and processing work.

March 2022 - Present Academic Tutor

Student Support Services - Texas State University

- Tutor students on academic subjects by helping to solve academic problems, offering support, and suggesting strategies for studying.
- Assist as an academic resource for students' needs on campus.

March 2022 - Present Collections Volunteer

Center for Archaeological Studies - Texas State University

- Working on cataloging and processing archaeological collections for analysis and curation.
- Identifying and solving documentation and curatorial issues.
- Completing archival research in order to aid in understanding of artifact analysis.

14 - 16 March 2022 Student Volunteer

Bonfire Shelter Restoration Project - Texas State University

- Traveled to the Lower Pecos to complete backfill and ground stabilization for Bonfire Shelter, an archaeological site.
- Worked with field crew to stabilize and preserve the site by filling in all excavations performing ground stabilization techniques.

May - August 2020 Art Coordinator

Mo-Ranch Presbyterian Assembly

- Single-handedly created, implemented, and ran an art curriculum and program for children's summer camp.
- Led leadership council of other counselors and head of programs to ensure the camp ran smoothly and mitigate issues.

Awards

Fall 2019 - Present	Dean's List Recipient
2021 - Present	Member of Phi Kappa Phi Honors Fraternity
2021 & 2022	Regents' Student Scholar Nominee - Texas State University System
2020 - 2021	Liberal Arts Award for Academic Excellence
2021 - 2022	Liberal Arts Award for Academic Excellence
2019 - Present	Presidential Scholarship Recipient (\$9,000 annually)
2019 - Present	Lone Star Scholarship Recipient (\$2,500 annually)
2020 - 2021	Helen Ratliff Cleaves Memorial Scholarship (\$800)
2019 - 2020	Family Association Endowed Scholarship (\$1,173)

Involvement

2021 - Present	Member of Society for Historical Archaeology
2022 - Present	Treasurer of Texas State Archaeology Club
2021 - Present	Member of Texas State Archaeology Club
2021 - Present	Member of Texas State Outdoors Club

Projects

Student Contributor (2020) "The Myths of Western Civilization: Decolonizing and Queering European History," *EuropeNow*, Imagining, Thinking, and Teaching Europe

Teaching Archaeology Workshop - Texas Historical Commission, San Antonio, Texas, Fall 2021