Allensworth: Preserving the Cemetery of “The Town That Refused to Die”

By

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A thesis project submitted to

Sonoma State University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

Cultural Resources Management

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November 29, 2017
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ABSTRACT

Allensworth, established in 1908 in the San Joaquin Valley, is the only town in California to have been founded, financed and governed by African Americans. Its founding represents African American efforts to achieve greater opportunity and to prove equality during the repressive Jim Crow era following Reconstruction.

A portion of the historical town site was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 and has been protected since 1976 as Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. The Allensworth Cemetery, on the other hand, has been poorly preserved. The majority of the historic period grave markers are gone and plowing has disturbed the area.

The original Allensworth pioneers and their descendants no longer live there, but many of their lineal descendants continue to visit the town site. Additionally, the Friends of Allensworth organization and other members of the African American community who live in the area also belong to the Allensworth descendant community. These ‘figurative descendants’ have much in common with the historical residents of Allensworth in terms of experiences, history, and values, and they should be viewed as having a substantial stake in the Allensworth Cemetery. With the Allensworth descendant community as the “ethical client” the author collected oral history, helped redefine the cemetery boundaries, and determined the components of this resource. The author researched the legal status of the Allensworth Cemetery, and assessed the Allensworth Cemetery’s eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources and as a California Historical Landmark.

This project explored the concept of archaeology as a form of civic engagement, and collaborated with the descendant community in a way which furthered social justice goals and which is relevant to the present.

MA Program: Cultural Resources Management
Sonoma State University

November 29, 2017
Acknowledgement

Heartfelt thanks to:

Committee members: Alexis Boutin, Margaret Purser, Beatrice Cox

Allensworth descendant community members: Carnell Montgomery Jr., the Pierro Family, Ann Williams, Kayode and Denise Kadara, Penny Singleton-Eldridge, Nettie Morrison, Parnell Lovelace, Ed Cornelius Pope; The Friends of Allensworth

Eleanor Ramsey and Betty Rivers for their extensive work on Allensworth

Stacey De Shazo for National Register guidance

Jonathan Waltmire of the Tulare County Library for tracking down archival aerial photos

ASC staff for assistance at various stages: Tom Whitley, Bryan Mischke, Mike Konzak, Sandra Konzak, Samantha Dollinger, Doshia Dodd, Scotty Thompson and Scott McGaughey

SSU Geology Department for the loan of their GPR equipment

Christopher Anderson for photos

My folks, Lynn and Kevin Thompson

GPR field crew: Ryan Poska and Travis Pfohl

Fellow CRM students, Eric Thibault & Travis for afternoons at Lobo’s, sanity assistance, etc.
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1. Introduction: Project Description and Research Questions

The town of Allensworth, a portion of which is now Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park, is located in the Central Valley of California. It was established in 1908, after the end of Reconstruction and during the peak of the Jim Crow laws, by Colonel Allen Allensworth, who escaped enslavement and went on to become the highest ranking African American military man of his time (Friends of Allensworth 2016). While numerous Black “boom and bust’ towns, mining camps, and small settlements” have been identified (Cox 2007:11) in California dating from 1850 and 1910, Allensworth is the most significant and is the only town in California to have been founded, financed, and governed by African Americans. It represents an attempt to achieve greater opportunity and to prove equality during the Jim Crow era. Although it had a population of only a few hundred during its peak (Ramsey 1977:100-103), Allensworth was a unique social center for Black Californians. It was an important railway-shipping hub for the wheat industry and was home to two churches, a school and several thriving businesses. Unfortunately, this prosperity was short-lived. A combined series of events precipitated hardship in the community, including water shortages caused by upstream diversion and by the broken contractual agreement of a water company, as well as the construction of a spur line of the railroad that bypassed Allensworth, and the death of town founder Colonel Allensworth. These factors, combined with the lack of jobs in the area and increased work opportunities elsewhere, led to the slow decline of the town. The original Allensworth pioneers and their

1 Preference of terms regarding self-identification of ethnicity varies based upon a variety of factors, and the terms ‘Black’ and ‘African American’ have extensive histories of changing connotation and preference. In this thesis, I use both.
descendants no longer live there, but many of their lineal descendants continue to visit the town site.

Many members of African American communities in various places of California are invested in the wellbeing of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. The Allensworth stakeholder community also includes other members of the public and employees of California Department of Parks and Recreation. A key group of stakeholders is the Allensworth descendant community which is made up of lineal descendants of the original Allensworth pioneers and figurative descendants including members of the non-profit cooperating association the Friends of Allensworth, as well as members of the African American community who currently live in the area. During the course of my involvement in this project it was crucial for me to cooperate and collaborate with the Allensworth descendant community.

Allensworth is representative of the historical and cultural contributions of Black Americans and it is an important site of remembrance and maintenance of memory and social connections for many people. Unfortunately, only a portion of the historical town site was preserved as a State Historic Park. While many of the buildings of downtown Allensworth have been restored or reconstructed, the boundaries of the Allensworth Cemetery have been lost. The Allensworth Cemetery is located approximately 1.5 miles to the southwest of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. Established in 1918 as an approximately five-acre plot, this cemetery is believed to contain forty-five burials dating from as far back as 1911 (Friends of Allensworth 2015). In 1921, a grant deed was filed in the Tulare County Court House documenting the transfer of a parcel of land to three individuals representing the Allensworth Cemetery Committee; these individuals are...
currently listed as the owners. However, over time the adjacent agricultural fields have encroached on the cemetery grounds, while plowing has disturbed the area and blurred the boundaries of the cemetery property. The Allensworth Cemetery contains approximately 43 graves, arranged in two rows. All of the earliest grave markers are absent; nine relatively recent ones remain, dating between 1992 and 2013 (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Overview of the Allensworth Cemetery with cemetery sign in background, facing south. Photo by the author.

The Allensworth Cemetery is the focus of this research project. The goals of the project were to clarify the boundaries and legal status of the cemetery, to determine what the resource consists of, to seek effective methods of collaborating with the Allensworth
Descendant community, to pursue social justice goals in a civically engaged manner, and finally to determine if the Allensworth Cemetery is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or designated as a California Historical Landmark (CHL). These research goals were developed in collaboration with members of the Allensworth descendant community. Throughout this process, I used various methods to define the cemetery boundaries, its legal status, and eligibility for inclusion in the NRHP and CHL. The effects of our country's history of racial inequality are still largely present today, and there are many instances of past and present disregard for cemeteries of peoples of color (Burg 2008; Hackel 2012; Huffman 2016; McGhee 2008; Mortice 2017; Orser 2007; Palmer 2017; Platt 2011; Rainville 2009; Sayed 2017; USA Today 2013). This thesis discusses the importance of descendant community involvement, explores the concept of archaeology as a form of civic engagement, and is an important addition to the body of scholarship on the role of racism in cultural resource preservation in the American West. During this study, I viewed the cemetery within its sociohistorical context in order to help illuminate the ways in which the effects of a socially constructed racialization of a group influences the interpretation and the preservation process of historic American archaeological sites. Racialization refers to the process in which people are designated as being members of a so-called race and treated unequally due to this ascribed categorization reinforced by imposed stereotypes. Struggles against systematic inequality are ongoing, and this thesis is therefore relevant to social issues of today.

For this project, I collaborated with the Allensworth descendant community to help document, study and preserve the Allensworth Cemetery. Some members of this community have buried their family members in the cemetery relatively recently and may
themselves wish to eventually be buried there, therefore it was necessary to balance the historic value of the cemetery with the current needs of the various members of the descendant community. Collaborative archaeological projects such as this one can foster civic engagement by bringing diverse people together in dialogue, helping to shape the place they live in a democratic way. As a civically engaged project, this thesis examines the impact of racist sociohistorical systems of the past in the present, and helps demonstrate archaeology’s use as a venue for addressing these wrongs. Since my work adds to a diverse body of scholarly work it is necessary for me to establish how this project fits into the current milieu of scholarship on the role of race and racism in archaeology, of descendant community and stakeholder participation in archaeological projects, and of archaeology as a venue of civic engagement.

In order to achieve the goals of this project, I addressed four primary research questions, which were developed and refined in collaboration with members of the Allensworth descendant community. The first is the most straightforward and concerns the physical site of the Allensworth Cemetery: What are its boundaries and what does this resource consist of? The second question is: What is the legal status of the Allensworth Cemetery? My third research question is: How can I make this a civically engaged historical archaeology project which is relevant to social justice goals? Finally, what is the eligibility of the Allensworth Cemetery for official recognition in the form of inclusion in the NRHP or as a CHL? These questions guided the methods that I used throughout the project.

Fulfillment of the goals enumerated above required learning about the relevant environmental and social contexts in which Allensworth is situated, gaining familiarity with studies regarding race and racism in archaeological research, African American
cemeteries, and descendant community and stakeholder involvement in archaeological research. It was also necessary that I study the concept of archaeology as a form of civic engagement, and that I learn about African American historical sites in relation to the NRHP. These areas of study form the framework for my project.
2. Contexts for Research

This chapter discusses the natural and cultural history of the region, the cultural significance of Black towns in the West, and the history of the Allensworth Cemetery. Then it describes the relevant scholarly environment into which this thesis fits, and the theoretical frameworks that I employ to discuss my methods and findings.

Environmental and Social Contexts

The town of Allensworth is located in the southwestern region of California’s Central Valley. Since it is possible that at some point in the future the area of the Allensworth Cemetery may be subject to actions involving environmental and/or cultural resource laws, the environmental context is provided here. The Allensworth Cemetery lies approximately 45 miles northwest of Bakersfield, off California State Route 43 (Figure 2). The town of Allensworth sits at the dry bed of Tulare Lake. During the Pleistocene epoch, this lake was part of Tulare Basin, which included Tulare, Buena Vista and Kern lakes, and the vast, seasonally fluctuating system of wetlands, floodplains, marshes, and channels surrounding these bodies of water (ECORP Consulting Inc. 2007:3-4; Garone 2006:65) In historic times, the South Fork Kings, Kaweah, Tule, White and Kern Rivers flowed into the Tulare Basin, as did Deer Creek. The Tulare Basin is located along the Pacific Flyway migratory route and provided habitat for millions of migrating birds (Garone 2006:7).
Human presence in the area extends back at least 8,000 years (Wallace 1978:449). The area around the shoreline of Tulare Lake was occupied by members of the Southern Valley Yokuts language group. They practiced a mixed subsistence strategy with an emphasis on plant and animal foods from the lake, including waterfowl, fish, shellfish,
turtles, and various plant foods (Wallace 1978:449-450). The Tule plant was a staple of their lifestyle; the roots and seeds were harvested and eaten, and the stalks were used to make watercraft for transportation and hunting (Wallace 1978:450;452).

The first European known to have visited the area was Pedro Fages, a soldier, explorer and Governor of Alta California who encountered the Southern Valley Yokuts during his 1772 expedition. Friar Francisco Garcés followed shortly after in 1776 (Wallace 1978:459). During the period of Spanish missionization many Native American peoples from Western California fled to the Central Valley to escape the missions, while a series of expeditions set out for the purpose of identifying future mission sites and seeking converts and runaway missionized Natives to bring to the missions on the coast (Wallace 1978:460). Later explorations by Euro-Americans included those of Jedediah Smith in 1826-7, and those of John C. Fremont, Lieutenant George H. Derby and R.S. Williamson who made a series of expeditions between 1844 and 1853 for the US Army Corps of Topographical Engineers (Garone 2006:67). In 1833, a malaria epidemic reached the Central Valley, killing up to three-quarters of the native population (Cook 1955:303; 308) Many were moved to reservations in the latter part of the 1800s, while others worked in the lumber and agricultural industries (Wallace 1978:460).

Major diversions of the water that flowed into Tulare Lake began in the 1850s, instigated by the Swamp and Overflowed Lands Act of 1850. This diversion continued for the purposes of irrigation, reclamation of farmable lands, and flood control (ECORP Consulting, Inc. 2007:7; 15; Garone 2006:70). Consistent with California’s wheat boom of the 1870s-1890s, this grain was the main crop grown on the ‘reclaimed’ land. In 1899, the lake was first reported to be dry; however, the lake did and still does occasionally flood
during periods of high runoff (ECORP Consulting, Inc. 2007:34-35). The Central Pacific Railroad line to Bakersfield reached Tulare County by 1874 and shortly after a branch of the Southern Pacific Railroad reached the Mussel Slough district to the north of Tulare Lake (Garone 2006:71). These rail lines carried thousands of pounds of produce from Tulare County to market.

In addition to the economic context, it is necessary to delve into the social context of Allensworth’s founding. As Kerri Barile (2004:92) writes, “By placing the property within its unique sociohistoric context, each site takes on individual meaning and can be interpreted on a number of levels.” While agriculture was the primary occupation of most of those who chose to settle at Allensworth, the reasons African Americans came there to build lives for themselves were much more complex.

My project builds upon the M.A. thesis of Beatrice Cox, who studied the relationship between the artifacts found at the site of the Allensworth Hotel and the sociopolitical climate of the early 20th century when Allensworth was founded (Cox 2007). By viewing the material culture within the sociohistorical context of Jim Crow, Cox described the 1988 excavation of the hotel and the social role of this important community institution, and argued that the artifacts found at the hotel site are representative of African Americans’ desire for success and equality, consistent with the goals of both Booker T. Washington and W.E.B du Bois. She writes:

> The park at Allensworth is a representation of a community embedded in the diverse racial and political ideals of the Jim Crow era. It is evidence of African Americans negotiating a racist social system by way of accommodation and
resistance, using education, ingenuity, and integrity during one of the darkest hours of this country's history [Cox 2007:73].

As Cox's (2007) thesis demonstrates, viewing the town of Allensworth through the lens of the sociohistorical context of the Jim Crow era greatly enhances the meaning of its archaeological remains. Cox shows that by providing the sociopolitical context for the community of Allensworth, it is possible to utilize “… a new inquiry for interpretation of qualitative data that informs African American sites” (Cox 2007:iv). Cox emphasizes the importance of examining “the distinct relationship between material culture and political ideologies within racial inequities” and states that “…the current social activism strengthen[s] the need for a pause to reflect on this avenue of inquiry” (2). Following Cox's lead, this thesis takes the same stance. It is crucial to view the Allensworth Cemetery in terms of the repressive social context during which it was established and used in historic times. Furthermore, I argue that the physical state of the Allensworth Cemetery today is related to ambient social and political conditions in the present as well as the past. Learning these social contexts sheds light on the significance of the Allensworth Cemetery in both the past and present, and enhances its relevance to those living in the present day.

Allensworth was formed in response to the repressive sociopolitical climate following the end of Reconstruction. As Elena Albert, Program Director of the San Francisco African American Historical and Cultural Society states, “Although this nation had outlawed slavery with the emancipation proclamation, no efforts were being directed towards psychological emancipation for the millions of newly freed slaves” (Albert 1972).
Colonel Allen Allensworth, founder of the town, was himself a former slave. He was born in Kentucky in 1842, and gained freedom when he crossed over Union lines during the Civil War (Friends of Allensworth 2016). He became a minister and Captain of the 24th Infantry, eventually achieving the rank of Lieutenant Colonel (Alexander 1914). The Friends of Allensworth write,

Noticing that hundreds, if not thousands, of Blacks were migrating to California to avoid the de jure segregation policies and practices of the south and the de facto discriminatory policies and practices of the north, Colonel Allensworth also decided to go west. He moved to Los Angeles to establish a viable community, a dream he had nurtured for many years as a result of his own experiences and those of other Afro-Americans of the most vile forms of discrimination. He was touched by the condition of black people, with whom he was surrounded, and his pity, his indignation at the injustices they had to endure, his zeal for their relief and improvement, and his remarkable self-control under many provocations made him a valuable citizen [Friends of Allensworth 2016].

In June of 1908 Allen Allensworth and four other colleagues, all residents of Los Angeles, formed the California Colony Home Promoting Association (Ramsey 1977:16). Word of this colony spread through newspapers, promotional literature, public speaking events and personal networking (Ramsey 1977:14, 76). As a result of Colonel Allensworth’s connections to the military, several military families invested in and/or moved to Allensworth (Ramsey:1977:90-91).
The founding of Allensworth as an intentional Black community was not unusual. The settlement of African Americans at Allensworth is consistent with nationwide trends of Black migration in the period between 1870 and 1910. At this time, the US government was supporting westward expansion, while Reconstruction had ended and the oppressive reign of Jim Crow set in (Ramsey 1977:36). In response to the revocation of rights and freedoms, and the increasingly violent oppression, thousands of African Americans migrated to the West in search of a better life (Taylor 1998:135). Far from being simple efforts to be able to make a living these western ‘race colonies’ represented an attempt for Black Americans to live freely and to achieve self-actualization, away from the repressive effects of white society. Cox writes,

...living in Allensworth, uninhibited by daily encounters with discriminatory laws, allowed the citizenry the autonomy and opportunity to flourish, and in isolation, the community exercised self-government, self-education, and self-employment, and shared common principles by which to live. Investing and/or relocating to Allensworth was a commitment to the belief and practice of the political ideals of DuBois and Washington who encouraged social accommodation and cultural pluralism as a way of negotiating racialized circumstances. The community quickly defied Jim Crow stereotypes, becoming the civic model of a viable American community within six years [Cox 2007:6].

Many who came to join the colony were well educated and politically active. The Hackett family, for example, had a comfortable life in the Bay Area, where the father J. A.
Hackett (Figure 3) owned two successful businesses and helped found a church, a chapter of the Afro American Council, and was active in the N.A.A.C.P. (Rivers ca. 2000). Former Allensworth resident Sadie Hackett Calbert stated, “My father was very race conscious and that was why, after all his long residence in Alameda, he decided he wanted to go and be a part of it” (1976 or 1983). Benjamin “Pap” Singleton was especially influential in the establishment of Black towns in Kansas (Ramsey 1977:37). His son, Joshua, eventually moved to Allensworth (Ramsey 1977:84), and is buried in the Allensworth Cemetery (Figure 4).
Figure 3. Excerpt from the San Francisco Call, Nov 22 1896.
Figure 4. Excerpt from the Bakersfield Californian, May 8 1928.

Allensworth was consistent with other general trends in African American ‘Race Colonies,’ as well. Like most other intentional Black communities, Allensworth was situated on sub-optimal land. Ramsey writes,
Race Colonies, almost without exception, were situated in predominantly rural counties on undeveloped land. Land procurable for settlement was characteristically individual private holdings, federal lands, or railroad holdings. Environmentally, the tracts made available were in general an unquestionable travesty. Poor soil, inadequate water, and physical inaccessibility characterized the lands the promoters could usually secure for Race Colonies. In those instances where the adverse conditions were overcome, it was only through a concerted group effort, and success was not without great travail in every case [Ramsey 1977:33-34].

Indeed, the soil around Allensworth is alkaline and poor, and many Allensworth farmers had to find work outside of the colony to supplement the profits from their crops (Ramsey 1977:150) Finding employment, as well, was a struggle. It was rare for African Americans to be permitted to have well-paid jobs. Ramsey’s conversations with pioneers revealed that no Black station managers or ticket agents were hired to work at the Allensworth depot between 1908 and 1920 (Ramsey 1977:74). Norvis Powell, who was interviewed in 1976 by Ramsey at the age of 84, recalled looking for work at several of the nearby towns and seeing businesses with signs reading, "NO negroes filipinos mexicans dogs" (Ramsey 1977:156).

Group effort and collaboration as a way of mitigating hardship was prevalent in many aspects of life at Allensworth. In an interview with Ramsey, Florence Phillips Broiles recalled that when a family experienced a crisis such as a loss of income or a house fire,
'pound parties’ were put on: “People would bring the stricken, troubled family a pound of this and a pound of that—flour, sugar, lard, or what have you” (Ramsey 1977:136). When a member of the community died, a women’s group known as the Burial Corps, led by Mrs. Birdie Phillips, assisted the families of the newly deceased by collecting donations of food and materials and making funeral arrangements. Embalming took place out of town, often at the Frank W. Goble Mortuary in Tulare. “But as a rule the wake took place at the decedent’s home, the funeral at the Baptist Church, and the interment in Allensworth Cemetery. All of these ritual events were undertaken under the Burial Corp’s’ supervision” (Ramsey 1977:136-7). The Burial Corps shows similarities to the practices of African American burial associations and fraternal organizations which helped provide the necessary items and funding for members’ eventual funerals (Middle Texas State University Center for Historic Preservation 2016:27). The Burial Corps’ existence is clearly consistent with the Allensworth colony’s ideals of self-sufficiency and community.

Education was integral to these values of community cohesion and self-sufficiency (Ramsey 1977:118). The school building was the largest in town, and “it was the one agency that held together all segments in the community, fostering group cohesion and promoting conditions for change” (Ramsey 1977:115). In the Annual Report of the Tulare County Superintendent of Schools, 1912-13, Ramsey (1977:118) found that the community of Allensworth spent far more on their school than did other nearby communities of comparable size.

In 1914, the Allensworth community put in vast amounts of political organizing and effort in an attempt to pass Assembly Bill 299, which would allow for the establishment of the Allensworth Polytechnic Institute. An industrial training school that was intended to be
the Tuskegee of the West, it was expected to draw students from throughout the Western United States (Ramsey 1977:174). However, the effort to pass this Bill was ultimately unsuccessful. Ramsey stated,

> Since the school offered a real possibility for this experiment to be placed on a sound economic footing, persons opposing the separatist philosophy as an approach for redressing institutional racism would have reason to be concerned about the Allensworth School and a vested interest in its defeat [Ramsey1977:183].

The defeat of Assembly Bill 229 was not the only setback the community of Allensworth experienced at that time. The town had been waging an ongoing struggle to obtain enough water to supply their farms. The water table had dropped and the Pacific Farming Company, which had entered into a contract with Allensworth to supply an increased amount of water to the town as it grew, refused to carry out its obligation (Ramsey 1977:134). Henry Singleton, the son of an Allensworth pioneer, told Ramsey, “The venture was a skin game, plain and simple—White men cheating Black men. Pacific Farming did not intend to honor the contract, and the Race could not command the political support to make them do so” (Ramsey 1977:64).

In 1914, the Santa Fe Railroad built a spur line to the nearby white town of Alpaugh, and moved the depot there. In September of the same year, Colonel Allensworth was killed by a motorcyclist in Monrovia, CA. In the face of these major setbacks, as well as the effects of the Depression, Allensworth residents, particularly young adults, soon began to move away to cities in search of job opportunities, and the advent of World War II with its boom
in Bay Area shipyard jobs further contributed to this exodus (Ramsey 1977:189). By 1966 there were only 34 families living in Allensworth (Ramsey 1977:189). A portion of the historic town site of Allensworth was added to the NRHP in 1972 and was established as a State Historic Park in 1976 (Ramsey 1977:190). Some African Americans moved there after the town's heyday and some of these individuals are involved in community organizing. As of 2010, Allensworth Census Designated Place has a population of 471 and 90% of the residents are Hispanic/Latino (United States Census Bureau 2010). The descendants of Allensworth pioneers no longer live in Allensworth. However, many of them return to the site for events such as the Annual Rededication.

The trajectory of decline caused by the factors above was reversed by the actions of Cornelius Edward Pope, a former Allensworth resident who was working as a draftsman with the California State Department of Parks and Recreation. On the day of Martin Luther King Jr's assassination, Pope began advocating Allensworth as a historical district as a way to continue to advance the goals of the Civil Rights Movement and its murdered leader (Pope 2006). His and others’ efforts, as mentioned in the introduction, culminated in the establishment of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park in order “to assist the general public in developing healthy attitudes towards people of different backgrounds and cultures” (Albert 1971:7), and the placement of Allensworth Historic District on the NRHP. Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park was established in 1976, and various structures were restored and reconstructed in a portion of the downtown area in the 1970s-1980s.

The town of Allensworth has been the focus of several other publications and scholarly works, over the years. One of the most extensive works is Eleanor Ramsey’s 1977 dissertation entitled ‘Allensworth—A Study in Social Change.’ The Friends of Allensworth
have also written about the history and social significance of Allensworth (Friends of Allensworth 2016).

The Friends of Allensworth is the official cooperating association for Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. It was founded in 1982 by Nettie Morrison. The Friends of Allensworth has 501(c)(3) status, and its mission is to support, promote and advance the educational and interpretive activities at Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. The Friends of Allensworth have eight Chapters, and the organization is governed by a Board of Directors who meets regularly. The current President is Stephen Hill. The Friends of Allensworth put on a series of events throughout the year at the Park, where volunteers don period costumes to serve as docents, giving tours of the buildings and teaching visitors about the history of the town and its inhabitants. Annual events include commemorations of Black History Month, the Annual Rededication, and the celebration of Juneteenth.

The significance of Juneteenth deserves some consideration. The celebration of this holiday goes back to 1865, when news reached Texas that slavery had ended. The modern-day celebration has a focus on Black education and achievement. One of the speakers was a youth who recounted the history of the celebration, noting that explanations for the fact that this news came two years after the Emancipation Proclamation include that the original messenger was killed on his way to Texas to share the news, or that the news was withheld so that landowners could benefit from enslaved labor long enough to bring in the cotton harvest.

Historically, whites attempted to curtail the celebration of Juneteenth by forbidding African Americans to use public spaces for celebratory events. In response, African
American communities made their own spaces by gathering at lakes or rivers, or by raising money to purchase park space to celebrate (Gates 2013).

The reconstructed downtown of Allensworth and the celebration of Juneteenth share a connection wherein their resurgence is in part in response to the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. In an interview with Smithsonian Magazine, Dr. William Wiggins Jr., a scholar of black cultural traditions, describes how the Poor Peoples March of 1968, shortly after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., included a closing celebration of Juneteenth. Wiggins states his theory that attendees of this event brought the Celebration of Juneteenth back to their home communities (Luthern 2009). The Juneteenth celebration at Allensworth illustrates connection to history and to many of the values held by many African Americans throughout the country.

Despite the many major setbacks that the town of Allensworth has experienced over the years, the vision and legacy of its founders remains active, largely due to the efforts of the African American community. With this understanding of the history of Allensworth, a better understanding of the past and current significance is possible.

The environmental and social contexts surrounding the Allensworth Cemetery having been reviewed, the scholarly context in which this project takes place can now be described. The following sections include a review of literature taken from relevant fields of study that include: Archaeology as a form of Civic Engagement, African American Archaeology (with an emphasis on cemeteries), Collaboration with Descendant Communities, and African American Heritage Sites and the NRHP.
Scholarly Contexts

This project takes place within a large body of relevant research and scholarship within the topics of archaeology as a form of civic engagement, African American archaeology, African American cemeteries, the embodiment of racism, archaeological projects carried out in collaboration with descendant communities. The following literature review shows how these studies have informed my study of the Allensworth Cemetery, and shows how this project fits into the current scholarly milieu.

Archaeology as Civic Engagement

The body of literature on archaeology as civic engagement addresses issues of systematic inequality in the present, not just the past. The current theoretical development known as the New Pragmatism indicates that archaeologists and heritage managers should be cognizant of the impact of our work on present-day communities. We are becoming increasingly aware of the inherent power in our position as authorities on and interpreters of the past. Viewing archaeology as a form of civic engagement is a relatively new phenomenon and this field of study is developing quickly, with numerous recent publications on the topic. According to Caryn McTighe (2003:7) civically engaged persons understand the past’s legacy of inequality, and “have a firmer grasp of the arts of democracy as interpersonal process, as political mechanisms, and as aspirational values.” Publications by those who practice and write about archaeology as a form of civic engagement guided my work at Allensworth. Many of these studies focus on activist archaeology, as a sub-type of civically engaged archaeology.
Despite the widely accepted benefits of descendant community involvement in archaeological projects as a way to further democratic goals, the power of heritage studies to influence political and social reality has been questioned. As Kaufman states,

heritage politics rarely offer a direct route to social, economic or political change; victory in the fight for historical inclusion rarely leads directly to economic or political empowerment. If anything, the levers are more likely to work in the opposite direction: economic and political empowerment will lead directly to greater and more meaningful victories in the arena of heritage politics [Kaufman 1998:64].

In contrast to Kaufman’s rather disheartening conclusion, a plethora of scholars nevertheless argue for the value of archaeologists attempting to bring about positive social change through their work. Margaret Wood indicates that

an engaged and transformative archaeology emerges from a critical and historical understanding of the world; our participation in building democratic relations within our classrooms, field schools, and places of work; and through our active engagement in social action groups outside of the academy.” This project, designed to partially take place outside of the academic context, sought to heed this call to active engagement [Wood 2002:191].
Like Wood, Michael Blakey (2010b:526) emphasizes the importance of engagement, where descendant communities can have voice in research projects as a way to make that research meaningful to them. He states that,

"By drawing upon broader societal ideas and interests, public engagement affords opportunities for advancing knowledge and its societal significance. The democratization of knowledge involved here is not predicated on the inclusion of random voices, but on democratic pluralism that allows for a critical mass of ideas and interests to be developed for a bioarchaeological site or other research project, based on the ethical rights of descendant or culturally affiliated communities to determine their own well-being [Blakey2010b:526]."

Uzi Baram (2015:68) echoes the importance of engagement and democracy in his accounts of civically engaged projects he has led in Florida. He states that these projects have worked “...to reveal the silences and meanings of the past for the present,” and that they have “opened up understanding of challenging contemporary social issues.” He emphasizes the potential of archaeology to build social capital and to foster inclusion (Baram 2015:66).

While many scholars advocate and provide models for descendant community partnership and archaeology as civic engagement, not all of them turn the scholarly spotlight upon themselves or their own position, culture, and biases. The more sophisticated and nuanced papers are written by self-reflexive scholars who “reflect upon, critique, and theorize the process involved in public archaeology and heritage work”
(McDavid 2010:36). This combination of self-reflexion and ‘theoretical probing’ is key, and it represents what I see as the newest, most current direction of archaeology as civic engagement. In his introduction to *Archaeologists as Activists: Can Archaeologists Change the World?* Jay Stottman (2010:126) writes, “within the framework of a critical theoretical perspective that illuminates self-reflection and emphasizes the importance of the political and ideological environment of archaeological research, we now begin to seek an application of archaeology for the benefit of the public.” He states, “a self-reflexive perspective is an important aspect of critical theory, in particular, with respect to the development of public archaeology. Through self-reflexivity, archaeologists began to understand the politics and agendas that often accompany their research. It is self-reflexivity in public archaeology that allows us to move beyond public archaeology into activist archaeology” (2010:5). Many activist efforts focus on combating racism and describe how self-awareness on the part of the archaeologist fits in to this effort (McDavid 2010; McDavid and McGhee 2010; Orser 2007). Orser (2007:38) writes, “Racialization transcends time, and archaeologists who want to examine its myriad expressions must be prepared to embrace the reflexivity that its study entails.” An understanding of this need to be self-reflexive and aware of my position in the social environment surrounding me guided my work at Allensworth.

*African American Archaeology*

Academic environments undergo frequent change, and the field of African American archaeology is no exception. The past few decades have seen a major change in the way researchers view race in archaeology. Maria Franklin (1997) calls for historical
archaeologists to engage in self-reflection on their objectives in archaeological practice and to consider the question of who benefits from the findings. Noncritical approaches to archaeology, or approaches that do not closely consider the impact or role of race, she argues, help allow current racism, gender bias and classism to continue unquestioned. Furthermore, she argues that archaeological research “must be viewed within the context of contemporary American race relations” (Franklin 1997:39). She states that it is up to historical archaeologists to reach out to and include both Black academics from related fields and the Black community at large when undertaking projects dealing with African American archaeology. There is much to be gained in doing so, since by involving the African American community historical archaeologists can gain access to new perspectives and deeper understandings of the past and take steps to recognize and correct racism – both inadvertent and conscious – today.

Charles Orser (1998) makes a similar argument calling for American historical archaeologists to take more of a front-line role in studying race and racism and to make their investigations relevant to a wider range of people. Orser states that the majority of archaeologists have been choosing to focus on ethnicity, “using material objects to identify past social groups,” while ignoring the issue of race in the archaeological record and the implications of race in the past (1998). He stresses that the field of historical archaeology is largely a study of capitalism and that since racialization is a significant factor in economic issues its impact should be studied. In light of our current sociopolitical climate historical archaeologists have a responsibility to study closely evidence of racism in the archaeological record, and to consider its relationship to modern life. It is crucial that the scholar and/or cultural resource manager be cognizant of the position from which they are
coming, in order to strive for broad perspective and inclusive interpretation. In this instance, my etic perspective was something that influenced my understanding of the data and experiences that I encountered during this project. My identity and experience as a white person has influenced my interpretations.

Mark Leone, Cheryl LaRoche and Jennifer Babiarz (2005) state that the field of African American archaeology is currently undergoing a transformation and that further change and development are still necessary. While numerous scholars (Blakey 2010b; Jeppson 2011; McDavid 2002 and 2010; McDavid and McGhee 2010; Orser 2007; Stottman 2010; Wood 2002) have emphasized the value of pragmatic approach to archaeological projects in terms of impacts on society, Agbe-Davies (2017) argues additionally for the use of pragmatism as an analytic model (Agbe-Davies 2017:9). She uses the example of blue beads found at African Diaspora sites as a way to demonstrate the value of pragmatism as an analytic mode. She states that pragmatism is “a field that plays to its own strengths and operates alongside rather than within” (Agbe-Davies 2017:24) more common methods or themes of interpretation (specifically, the persistence of tradition), and allows us to better understand the past. The kind of African American sites that are being studied is changing as well.

What had been an emphasis on plantation archaeology has been growing to include archaeological investigations of maroon (escaped slave) communities and those of other free Blacks (Franklin 2012:15). Examples of community-based studies of post-Civil War Black towns include the projects at New Philadelphia (Agbe-Davies 2010) and the Ransom and Sarah Williams Farmstead (Franklin 2012). Given the fact that until recently the focus of African American archaeology in this country has been on enslaved African Americans
rather than their descendants, relatively little African American archaeology has been done in the West. In fact, the excavation of Allensworth by the California Department of Parks and Recreation in the early 1970s was the first culture study done by archaeologists of an African American town site in California (Cox 2007:10).

Cheryl La Roche (2011:631-632) writes, “Restoring significant shared communal meanings for many neglected places first involves reclaiming the African American cultural landscape as important ground of American history.” Many of the views and changes described above are exemplified in Cox’s (2007) work at Allensworth. The goal of her research was to contextualize the archaeology of the hotel within the sociopolitical climate of Jim Crow. She states,

The evidence contributes to the current interpretive history of Allensworth in the context of the broader history of the African American experience in the United States and California. It further introduces the archaeological community to an aspect of Black town development as being a type of intentional/utopian community [Cox 2007:71].

_African American Archaeology and Civic Engagement_

In terms of African American archaeology, activist efforts have “largely revolved around battles for interpretive authority and control, as well as the fight to achieve recognition of the contributions made by enslaved Africans and African Americans in building the United States” (McDavid and McGhee 2010:471). In addition to fostering recognition of underrepresented peoples, scholars have written about ways in which
archaeology can try to oppose racism. Carol McDavid (2010:37) writes that in African diaspora archaeology, “the research itself has a great deal to do with the roots of racism and with the ways that racism has oppressed and continues to oppress specific social groups.” She focuses on

how archaeologists can use the public archaeology of African diaspora sites to acknowledge racism, to confront it, and to challenge it. By examining, critically and reflexively, what it is that our work does, we may be able to ally ourselves with others (in other disciplines as well as outside the academy) who yearn to eradicate this disease from contemporary society [McDavid 2010:37].

McDavid and McGhee (2010:475) believe that white scholars should aid in the acknowledgment of white privilege, echoing Bergerson (2003) who states that

white scholars must join the fight to legitimate research that utilizes alternative methods such as CRT, that comes from the lived experiences of individuals who have traditionally been marginalized and considered unimportant to scholarship, and that grows from the passion of doing research to effect changes that will benefit people of color [Bergerson 2003:60].

Paul Mullins (2007) is also interested in finding effective ways to practice civically engaged archaeology – the ultimate goal of which, he comments somewhat acidly, “should be a critical analysis of inequality and not a flood of volunteers who troop off to the PTO to
potentially craft collective political interests” (Mullins 2007:92). He describes the campus of Indiana University-Purdue University, a merged institution that expanded into a traditionally African American part of the city as part of the urban renewal movement of the 1950-1970s (Mullins 2007:94). He states that this campus and its surrounding surviving African American neighborhoods are “an ideal context to examine the archaeological evidence of the neighborhood’s communities and probe how the contemporary campus landscape was created to serve some groups while it dispossessed others” (Mullins 2007:94). Doing archaeology in this context “is one of many mechanisms that could encourage various forms of civic engagement among a wide variety of constituents, so we need to examine the underlying premises and goals of such engagement” (Mullins 2007:95).

Terrence Epperson (2004) argues that there is a logical alliance between African Diaspora archaeology and efforts against environmental racism, because it is the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and state environmental laws that require that archaeological investigation be done at African American sites in preparation for various projects or development. Epperson writes, “much of the African Diaspora archaeology practiced today is ultimately accountable to the same “human environment” provisions of NEPA that form the basis for many of the environmental justice movement’s legal challenges (Epperson 2004:104).

Praetzellis et al. (2007) also discuss the negative impacts of urban renewal, and provide a compelling example of how archaeologists can engage the community and use the study of the past to inform the present. Following the Loma Prieta earthquake, they led a cultural resources study for the Cypress Freeway Replacement Project in West Oakland, a
neighborhood that had been devastated over the years by so-called urban renewal (Praetzellis et al. 2007:112). Dialogue with the community allowed the archaeologists to illuminate the sociohistorical processes that had led to the destruction of this Black neighborhood, and to help generate public interest and recognition of that area's rich heritage. They collected artifacts and oral history, and through this dialogue and illumination, brought a measure of restorative justice to the community: ultimately the freeway was rebuilt elsewhere. Praetzellis and colleagues traced the historical roots of injustice and used archaeology as a means of starting dialogue and bringing about social justice in the present.

As demonstrated by Davidson and Brandon's experience with the Dallas Freedman's Cemetery and its descendant communities, and the Texas Department of Transportation, not all African Diaspora archaeological projects involving the descendant community are such simple and conflict-free interactions. In 1991, during preparations for the construction of a new Federal building in Manhattan an 18th-century cemetery containing the bodies of hundreds of Africans and African Americans was uncovered. The African Burial Ground, as it was known, was arguably the most high-profile instance of archaeology as civic engagement in the United States. Its discovery and excavation functioned as a platform for activism and protest (Blakey 2001; Howard University Press 2009; LaRoché 2011; Mack and Blakey 2004; Orser 2007:23). Conflict arose when the General Services Administration wanted to excavate the cemetery quickly and push ahead with construction, while the African American community protested this hasty treatment of their literal and figurative ancestors. They felt that they weren't being adequately consulted about the fate of the cemetery, and about the nature of the research that was being done on
the remains, which was shallow and focused upon racial categorization. Cheryl LaRoche (2011:632) writes of the African Burial Ground project: “The inequalities and injustices of the past often inspire social consciousness and action in modern communities who are often fighting against multiple, conflicting, and sometimes deeply rooted relationships involving cultural heritage.”

Public activism, mainly by African Americans, compelled the federal government to give them some say in the direction of the research program, and to give this site the recognition and treatment it deserved. Cheryl LaRoche and Michael Blakey write, “The descendant community immediately understood the parallels between the mishandling of the bones and the racial reality of their lives” (1997:89). Writer Ta-Nehisi Coates described this recognition of parallels, in the context of the terrorist attacks of September 11th. Coates (2015) writes,

I kept thinking how southern Manhattan had always been Ground Zero for us. They auctioned out bodies down there, in that same devastated, and rightly named, financial district. And there was once a burial ground for the auctioned there. They build a department store over part of it and then tried to erect a government building over another part. Only a community of right-thinking black people stopped them [Coates 2015:87].

Michael Blakey, who became the director of the project when the firm that was initially hired failed to produce a satisfactory research design, helped to demonstrate the important role that archaeologists can play in using the archaeological past for the needs of
the present communities. Because of his leadership, the descendant community could influence the way the data from the project was used. For example, it was important for community members that information be disseminated to the public. Elders, in particular, wanted youth to be able to learn about the site as a way to modify and enrich their sense of identity (Mack and Blakey 2004:15). As such, education and public outreach was an important part of the project.

Academia is a place where bias and control are exerted as well. The approach to the study of the African Burial Ground was a decision with political and historical implications. At the time of the site’s discovery, African Diaspora archaeology was neatly divided into two approaches: the biocultural and the forensic (Blakey 2001:409). While the forensic method focuses on straightforward description and identification of remains, the biocultural approach results in “a biological reflection of the social history of a community articulated with broad political-economic forces” (Blakey 2001:409). That is, a biocultural approach includes the historic background and the social context of the remains. The CRM firm that had originally been hired to excavate the Burial Ground was dismissed as a result of not producing an adequate research design. Michael Blakey, whose team took over the project, states, “given that we are dealing with only the past few centuries of history, the choice of either approach changes our current identities and understanding of the events that shape us today” (2001:409). Archaeologists engaged in for-profit archaeological projects often have both a ‘business client’ and an ‘ethical client’ (LaRoche and Blakey 1997:87; Mack and Blakey 2004:14). The new leadership of the project believed that the descendant community -the “ethical client”- should retain the right to reject, change or accept the research design (LaRoche and Blakey 1997:87; Mack and Blakey 2004:15). For
the African Burial Ground project, Blakey (2010:63) notes, “the research plan benefited from new and better questions than we could have devised without the descendant community.”

The African Burial Ground excavations have made it clear that archaeologists are not neutral actors. Blakey (2001:414) writes, “the years of wrangling with the federal government brought physical anthropologists and archaeologists into a politically active campaign as advisors on behalf of a descendant community.” As the events surrounding the excavation of the African Burial Ground have demonstrated, one of the most important roles that archaeology can play is that of a platform for discussion and civic engagement. Patrice Jeppson (2011:646) writes, “the African Burial Ground has deep significance for addressing concerns of inclusion, participation, access, and control in archaeological research and history interpretation.” The scholarly spotlight is turning increasingly upon the process and nature of these issues. One event, the *Dynamics of Inclusion in Public Archaeology Workshop*, was organized to help elucidate the role of archaeology/ the archaeologist in community engagement with the past (Jeppson 2011:638). The event encouraged participating archaeologists to take a collaborative dialogic approach in which the archaeologists and the descendants are viewed as being the products of their mutual history (639). A thorough understanding of the events and ideas related to the excavation of the African Burial Ground should inform future African American mortuary archaeology projects, as scholars continue to study archaeology as a place where history impacts modern struggles for power and recognition of inequality in the past and the present.

The literature described in this section served to make clear the political impacts of archaeological projects. It enabled me to become more aware of the meanings and results
of my involvement in the project. The other fields of literature which it was necessary to become familiar with were those of African American Archaeology, African American cemeteries, the concept of embodiment of racism, and the relationship between African American cultural and historical resources and the NRHP.

My project at Allensworth serves as a much-needed addition to archaeology in the American West and corresponds with current trends and changes in African American archaeology.

*Anthropological Approaches to African American Cemeteries and the Bodies of African Americans*

Cemeteries are important repositories of cultural information. Data exists above and below ground, on the level of the individual and the population. Keith Eggener (2010:n.p.) writes,

On one level, cemeteries are about the pasts we bury in them. But on another, they are inherently future-oriented. Memorials are nothing if not directed at those who will look upon them and be called to remember. They also speak of the hopes of the deceased. Because cemeteries are such patently liminal sites — poised between past and future, life and death, material and spiritual, earth and heaven — they more than any other designed landscapes communicate grand social and metaphysical ideas. They offer summations of lives lived and speak of community, the connection to place, mortality, afterlife, and eternity [Eggener 2010:n.p.].
An especially valuable attribute of the study of cemeteries is its ability to tell stories that history has forgotten or excluded (Rainville 2009:197). African Americans are underrepresented in historical written documents and so archaeological and bioarchaeological studies of cemeteries are a crucial way to access and tell their stories.

Cemeteries were places where enslaved African Americans could continue to express aspects of their African heritage, and they were and continue to be important nexuses for the maintenance of identity and community (McCarthy 2008:305-306). They were places where cultural identities and ties to Africa in the context of diaspora, assimilation and ethnogenesis were expressed (King 2010:125). African traditions were adapted to fit with European ones. Examples of this syncretism can be found in traditions such as the style of singing and clapping that is performed at many African American Christian churches (McCarthy 2008:307).

It is important for archaeologists to have some familiarity with the burial practices of African American cultures. One study that demonstrates the value of familiarity with African American mortuary material culture took place at the site of New Philadelphia, an Illinois town founded in 1836 by a freedman. At this cemetery, fragments of colorful glass were determined to be consistent with the decorations found at other African American cemeteries (King 2010:131). Without this knowledge, these artifacts might have been dismissed as trash and valuable data lost.

In a January 2017 interview Michael Blakey states, “A problem for African-American cemeteries is that we still live in a society that is significantly white supremacist, not only in its beliefs, but in the structure of its privileges” (Mortice 2017:n.p.). This structure of privileges extends to burial places. Today, historical African American cemeteries face a
disproportionate level of threat to their preservation through vandalism, urban renewal and development (Brandon and Davidson 2012; Mullins 2007; Praetzellis et al. 2007; Rainville 2009:197).

Lynn Rainville (2009:200) states, “In the case of historical, black cemeteries, the voices of descendants and concerned residents are often ignored if a burial ground stands in the way of economic development or new construction.” Rainville (2009:196) notes that “most disturbed or destroyed cemetery landscapes, gravestones, and human remains affect underrepresented groups that cannot afford or are not informed of their rights to protect these sites.” Wooden grave markers decompose over time (Honerkamp and Crook 2012:109; Rainville 2009:209)—as may have been the case with some of those in the Allensworth Cemetery—and cemeteries are forgotten, especially when descendants have died or moved away, and the cemeteries were not marked on maps or property deeds (Baugher and Veit 2014:15; Rainville 2009:200). In addition to this lack of visibility there are insufficient legal protections for historic burials.

While Native American remains in archaeological contexts have some measure of protection under the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) if they are discovered on Federal land or in the course of projects with Federal oversight, there is no such equivalent for the remains of African Americans. It has, however, been argued that this law can in fact be seen as applicable (Global Archaeology 2012:n.p.). While laws protecting burials exist in all states they vary in terms of coverage and effectiveness (Rainville 2009:200). One promising new development in the legal protections for historical African American graves took place in early 2017 when the Virginia House of
Delegates passed Bill 1547, which arranges for funds to be given to organizations that work to preserve the graves of African Americans. Unfortunately, California has no such law.

The ongoing effort to protect and preserve the Allensworth Cemetery is not the only recent effort to achieve greater recognition and respect for the burial places of historically important African American individuals. A local example took place during 2008 in Visalia, CA, where a new marker was placed at the grave of pioneer and equal rights forefather Edmund Edward Wysinger (Faison 2008). In this instance, the favorable media coverage that the event received is encouraging.

In addition to acknowledging the ongoing lack of protection for African American cemeteries, it is necessary to recognize that unequal levels of disregard and exploitation have been inflicted upon the African American bodies in contexts other than archaeology and cultural landscape study, throughout history and on into the present.

Many Black writers in both the past and the present portray systemic inequity and racism as an overwhelmingly physical process. Ida B. Wells (1895:n.p.) noted that with the advent of Emancipation, “the vested interests of the white man in the Negro’s body were lost.” A hundred and ten years later, Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015:103) writes, “In America, it is traditional to destroy the black body—it is heritage.” According to recent census data, in the year 2015 Black men made up 40 percent of unarmed people killed by police, but only 6 percent of the United States population (Lowery 2016).

In the period of time between death and burial, African Americans have experienced gross inequality of treatment, as well. A salvage excavation project in the basement of the Georgia Medical College revealed that in the 1800s a disproportionate number of the cadavers that were used for dissection in anatomy classes were the remains of African
Americans (Blakely 1997:13). Grave robbing was commonplace because it was difficult to legally obtain much-needed cadavers for dissection (5). Jackson writes, “…not only were dissection, medical experimentation, and grave robbing of blacks products of social, economic, and political powerlessness, they also served to maintain and reinforce hierarchical rank in a society dependent on inequality” (Jackson 1997:201).

Today, anatomical collections include many sets of remains representing poor African Americans whose bodies were turned over to science without their consent, while the biocultural context in which many of these individuals lived included major restrictions on their access to sufficient housing, employment, and medical care (Blakely 1997:13; De la Cova 2010, 2014; Watkins 2012). Both history and current events have shown that our society allots less respect to the bodies of African Americans.

_African American Heritage Sites and the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)_

In addition to the theoretical changes that have recently been taking place in the field of African Diaspora archaeology, there is a growing recognition on a national level that African American sites are under-valued and under-represented in the NRHP. The NRHP states,

_America's historic places embody our unique spirit, character and identity. Representing important historical trends and events, reflecting the lives of significant persons, illustrating distinctive architectural engineering, and artistic design achievement, and imparting information about America’s past, historic places tell compelling stories of the nation, and of the states and communities_
throughout the country. The National Register of Historic Places helps preserve these significant historic places by recognizing this irreplaceable heritage. Its primary goals are to foster a national preservation ethic; promote a greater appreciation of America’s heritage; and increase and broaden the public’s understanding and appreciation of historic places [National Park Service 2002].

Unfortunately, the current NRHP does not equally represent the diverse social groups and properties that are present in the United States, but instead, the NRHP is dominated by a select group of listings that are associated with the more well-to-do members of society are more likely to be preserved (Barile 2004; McGhee 2008; Morgan et al. 2006; Schmickle 2007). Morgan (2006:706) writes, “The historic preservation movement in the United States, including the way preservation legislation is enacted in daily practice, often preferences properties whose contemporary stewards are relatively prosperous and well educated.”

While Barile specifically set out to study the nature of race-based discrepancy in the NRHP, in another circumstance this conclusion was reached in a more indirect manner. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Morgan et al. (2006:712-713) found that, as is the case with many states, relatively few Mississippi and Louisiana properties were listed on the NRHP. This led to challenges “in assessing vernacular resources, especially those associated with minority groups.” One of the few NRHP properties associated with underrepresented communities was a single house in the Turkey Creek neighborhood in Gulfport, Mississippi. This neighborhood was established in 1866 by formerly enslaved African Americans, and concerns about the integrity of its other buildings had thus far kept the entire
neighborhood from being listed. It was only through the efforts of a community group that that house had been added to the Register (Morgan et al. 2006:713).

Barile (2004) conducted a study of NRHP determinations of African American archaeological sites in cultural resource management reports in Texas, and found that far fewer African American sites were deemed eligible than were white sites. She states that, for her study area, “many sites are not being explored on an adequate level since archaeologists fail to first reconstruct and evaluate a particular site’s historical context. Thus, these sites receive improper recordation” (Barile 2004:97). Fred McGhee, who specializes in Texas archaeology, supports Barile’s findings and states that “The lingering problem that remains is that racial prejudice and its effects are not considered proper historical contexts. White denial of the history, effects, and ongoing challenges of racial prejudice and racism are surely a major cause” (McGhee 2008:101). McGhee (2008:97) stresses the need to “employ a historical context analysis based on issues relevant to African American history and archaeology.” In terms of the town of Allensworth, this means viewing it within the context of the Jim Crow era and as a part of the extensive movement of intentional African American communities or ‘colonies.’ In many instances, ongoing issues of systematic racism and disempowerment are extremely relevant to African American history and archaeology. McGhee (2008) states,

The largely unacknowledged history of discrepant access among minority peoples to the resources and tools necessary for heritage making in Texas, has let its mark in a variety of places, laws, ideas, and customs. Therefore, truthful historic context for
African American archaeology and history in Texas must also describe that aspect of the story [McGhee 2008:98].

Barile notes that the tendency of many archaeologists to focus their attention on material culture is not a good method to use in studying sites with relatively low volumes of artifacts, as is the case with many sites associated with African Americans who, due to socioeconomic processes, had fewer material possessions to leave behind. Conversely, archaeologists studying the African American community of Friendship in northeastern Texas did thorough archival and oral history studies in order “to determine household models and to locate the larger community within a regional context. In doing so, the researchers moved beyond a single-facet study of belowground resources and were able to discern agency, consumer choice, and the interworkings of this tight-knit community” (Barile 2004:98). Unfortunately, this study of the Friendship community falls under the category of ‘gray literature,’ which is notorious for its lack of public accessibility and distribution. A NRHP nomination does not appear to have been part of that project, but Barile’s description of it nevertheless is an important example of how adjustments to the study were able to place the site within its historical context in the way that would be required for a NRHP nomination. The positive and negative examples of studies of African American historical sites described by Barile (2004:98) clearly demonstrate how “the failure to give proper recognition to site historic context where race and class figured largely and the emphasis on single-approach methodologies has resulted in a drastic reduction of NRHP eligible sites.” It becomes clear that a possible solution for how to better study historical African American sites includes employing a variety of different research
methods, and employing and including a historical context that includes the history of systematic race-based oppression.

According to NRHP Bulletin 41 (National Park Service 1992), historic cemeteries must meet certain conditions in order to be added to the NRHP. Bulletin 41, ‘Guidelines for Evaluating Cemeteries and Burial Places (1992),’ states the reasons why it is important for cemeteries to be listed on the NRHP:

National Register listing is an important step in preserving cemeteries because such recognition often sparks community interest in the importance of these sites in conveying the story of its past. Listing also gives credibility to State and local efforts to preserve these resources for their continuing contribution to the community’s identity. The documentation contained in surveys and nominations of these historic burying places—especially those cemeteries that are threatened or neglected—is the key to their better protection and management [National Park Service 1992].

In fact, National Register Bulletin 15 (1990) states,

Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within one of several categories. For example, criteria
consideration states that "A cemetery that derives its primary importance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events" will qualify for inclusion [National Park Service 1990].

The significance of a site is not always readily apparent when conducting research, especially when there is a lack of written records. As such, information gained from descendant communities is an important source of information regarding the history and significance of a historic site. It is clear that there is a need for more protections and study of African American cemeteries. It is also apparent that there should be greater recognition of the key role that descendant communities should play in the process of assembling documentary information during the preparation of NRHP nominations. Descendant communities should be involved so that those most affected by the archaeology are able to provide interpretations of the findings. Eleanor Ramsey (1977) states that with reference to the town of Allensworth, the investigator must examine cultural processes by means of reliance on the memories of the participants, who must be seen as active agents...

Not only does this type of investigation furnish knowledge about history through oral accounts, but it produces information about the way people look at their world. The group’s concept of history is as important in the reconstruction of cultural history as are the particular items of historical fact [Ramsey 1977:3-4].
McGhee (2008:97) demonstrates how oral history can help archaeologists “understand the role of historical memory in Black culture, politics, and expression.” Similarly, taking this sentiment into account, a NRHP nomination for the Allensworth Cemetery should discuss the unequal access of African Americans to heritage making tools in California. Guidance for how to achieve this more holistic view of historical context is provided by Barile (2004) who states that:

The effort to move towards multidisciplinary analyses that include the consideration of multilevel, historic contexts can best be achieved through greater awareness and renewed partnership among those involved in CRM, governmental, and academic work. This will result in a more accurate assessment of all sites... by placing them within their specific local or regional contexts and within the larger contextual framework of postbellum capitalist growth [Barile 2004:99].

The National Park Service is aware of the under representation of sites and properties associated with various peoples of color in the NRHP, and has taken steps to attempt to correct this issue. In 2004, they published an online book entitled *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California*, which was conceived “to broaden the spectrum of ethnic community participation in historic preservation activities and to provide better information on ethnic history and associated sites.” The authors state, “This information will help planners identify and evaluate ethnic properties, which have generally been under represented on historic property surveys” (NPS 2004:n.p.). The chapter on Black
Americans was co-written by Eleanor Ramsey and Janice Lewis (2004), and includes a description of Allensworth.

Collaboration with African American descendant communities

As just described for the NRHP process, there has also been increasing recognition by individuals of the role or combination of roles of scholar, academic, and archaeologist, and of the necessity and usefulness of working with descendant communities. Collaborative projects can allow the communities that are most affected by the work to influence the work’s direction by participating in the fieldwork and/or deciding what research questions to pursue. Successful community-based collaborative studies of African American archaeology have taken place in a variety of contexts.

Singleton (1997:151) points to the ability of archaeology to reveal untold stories and to give communities a say in the way their heritage is interpreted and preserved, and Young (2004) followed Singleton’s lead and instituted a program of African American archaeology in Mississippi. Young states,

The importance of working with descendant groups and conducting oral histories and ethnographic studies has been stressed in this program in order to make the most accurate interpretations possible about African American life from slavery to contemporary times in Mississippi and to ensure African Americans are involved in these interpretations [Young 2004:66].
McDavid and McGhee (2010) refer to Mack and Blakey’s (2004:14) term the “ethical client,” and state that

this may mean employing anthropological skills and knowledge to represent the needs and priorities of community members from the point of view of the community itself, utilizing language that the community understands. Most importantly, the community “owns” the research; they define the problem, they analyze it, and interpret it [McDavid and McGhee 2010:472-473].

This project seeks to answer the call of Singleton, McDavid, McGhee and others, to collaborate with the Allensworth descendant community to preserve the cemetery on the terms of the descendants and in a way that benefits them.

What exactly is meant by the term ‘descendant community’? Dean Saitta (2007:275–276) defines a descendant community as: “…a non-homogenous self-identified group encompassing those who, regardless of background, identify with a particular past or locale through shared traditions, proximity, or collective memories.” In addition to biological descent, descendant community membership can be through economic or political connection, by shared history or cultural affiliation (Blakey 2010a; Boutin et al. 2017; Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2008a; Rockefeller 2016). Descendant communities can provide valuable information in the form of insight and oral history, that researchers would otherwise not have access to (Timo 2013). Furthermore, oral histories can “serve as an independent line of evidence in contextualizing and interpreting” archaeological findings (Franklin 2012:4).
Numerous historic African American cemetery projects have involved collaboration with descendant communities (Blakely 1997; Burg 2008; Honerkamp and Crook 2012; Mack and Blakey 2004; McCarthy 2008; Timo 2013). Baugher and Veit (2014:34) state “cooperation and collaboration between archaeologists and descendant communities should be the hallmark of any future belowground archaeological research in cemeteries.” The level and nature of involvement with the descendant community varies between projects, but the scholars described here are united in their desire to focus upon goals with the descendant communities that they work with.

The excavations at the Georgia Medical College, where dissected remains were found in the basement, did not involve descendant communities in their recovery, but members of the descendant community still played an important collaborative role in interpreting them. The archaeologists interviewed both Black and white residents of Augusta, noting that, “the ethnographic component revealed perspectives and insights unavailable to us through the archaeological record (Blakely 1997:18). For example, as a result of the interviews, they learned that there were a variety of sources being used to get bodies for the College and that the African American communities worked to resist grave robbing (Blakely 1997:19). Blakely (1997:18) also noted that the interviews brought up new questions that the research team would otherwise not have thought to investigate. The archaeologists collaborated with the community to develop research questions and to generate data. A collaborative project to design a museum exhibit was planned and Blakely (1997:19) states, “Through the involvement of the people of Augusta today in our research, we have become partners with them in the exploration of their history and the dissemination of their heritage.”
Similarly, I hope that my collaborations with the Allensworth descendant community have resulted in valuable new information and new research questions. As with the Georgia Medical College project, members of the Allensworth descendant community were not directly involved in archaeological fieldwork such as ground penetrating radar survey or GPS mapping of the cemetery, or in the production of the archaeological site records. Instead, they were involved by providing information and providing interpretations of the cemetery and its taphonomic processes sociohistorically.

Steven Burg (2008) chronicled a project that included community involvement in the much-needed restoration of a historic African American cemetery, the Locust Grove Cemetery in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania. Like Allensworth, the neighborhood encompassing the Locust Grove Cemetery no longer had a majority of African American residents. Despite the efforts of the members of the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee, who all had relatives buried there, the cemetery suffered from vandalism, and a neighbor laying down pavement for a new driveway had covered some unmarked graves. Carrying out the project required that the researchers address the racial discrimination that was historically prevalent in Shippensburg, and examine the way that this history impacted the cemetery in the present day. Ultimately, the partnership amongst the Shippensburg Historical Society, Burg’s own applied history students and the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee resulted in the production of research, greater community interest and involvement, and the restoration of the cemetery (Burg 2008). With its many similarities to the circumstances of the Allensworth Cemetery, Burg’s work at the Locust Grove Cemetery has served as an important model for my work with the Allensworth community and the Allensworth Cemetery.
John McCarthy (2008) did work at two historic cemeteries associated with the First African Baptist Church of Philadelphia in preparation for construction of an expressway. The project worked with the local Afro-American Historical and Cultural Museum, which developed an interpretive program. The archaeologists consulted with the Church’s congregation and pastor and sought to develop mutual research and programming goals with them (McCarthy 2008:310). Excavations revealed that the burials of the more recently used cemetery incorporated more African-influenced mortuary practices than the early one did, and McCarthy (2008:306) interpreted these findings as indicative of community identity and social resistance. He writes, “It is archaeology’s unique privilege to uncover these places and their history and help communities rediscover much of what has been lost to them” (McCarthy 2008:311). Like McCarthy, I hope that my work at the Allensworth Cemetery can help the descendant community by assembling and preserving information about the cemetery.

A study of Behavior Cemetery on Sapelo Island, Georgia was another positive, mutually beneficial collaboration between academic archaeologists and the local residents. Goals for the project were decided upon by means of consultation; the goals were to record the extant grave markers, to find out the location of unmarked graves, and to study the layout of the site in terms of time and space (Honerkamp and Crook 2012:103). The authors took note of the important role that the cemetery had in the community, reporting that “adult funerals are associated with intense and cathartic ceremonies, and involve the participation of the entire community. They thus simultaneously function as rites of passage and solidarity” (Honerkamp and Crook 2012:109). Based on the findings and the recommendation of the archaeologists, the community decided to avoid burying additional
people in the cemetery for the time being, and they have organized community social events where they cook and eat lunch and work to clear brush from the cemetery (Honerkamp and Crook 2012:112). The article ends by noting that community members are considering working with youth to make markers for the unmarked graves found in the survey. “Such a worthy project would represent an additional benefit of the continuing collaboration between archaeologists and the Gullah-Geechee community (Honerkamp and Crook 2012:113). This focus on the work for the benefit of those in the present and the future is a hallmark of engaged, collaborative projects, and has served as a model for the Allensworth Cemetery project.

Davidson and Brandon (2012) were quite blunt about the forces that cause African Americans’ heritage to be lost to them. Davidson’s portion of their article describes his work with the Freedman’s Cemetery in Dallas Texas. The Texas Department of Transportation employed him to excavate a portion of a large historic African American cemetery to make way for an expressway, and he faced pressure from his bosses to work quickly. He states, “as I began working at Freedman’s Cemetery, by slow increments I became aware of the devastation that had occurred to the North Dallas Freedman’s Town community” (Davidson and Brandon 2012:612). Over the years, the construction of freeways and commercial buildings had basically erased what had once been a thriving historic district. This article drives home the point that descendant community partnering can be complicated, with “multiple scales of descendant communities” (Davidson and Brandon 2012:607), who had differing goals. For example, lineal and non-lineal descendants disagreed on whether DNA samples should be collected. As Brandon and Davidson (2012:610) note, “there was no single consensus or monolithic black community;
the reality was much more complicated and contentious, with many different factions and points of view.” Similarly, the Allensworth Cemetery descendant community consists of multiple groups and individuals, who may have different goals regarding the cemetery, and this article allowed me to anticipate potentially conflicting wishes within this community.

The site of Allensworth has an ongoing role in the lives of current and former residents, their descendants, and others. My work there did not exist in a vacuum, but had, and continues to have, an impact on many people and so it was crucial that I take this into account throughout the project.

The literature on African American archaeology, descendant community participation, archaeology as civic engagement, and self-reflection in archaeology that is described above guided my work at Allensworth. An understanding of the environmental and social contexts within which the town of Allensworth was formed allow for an accurate and meaningful understanding of the significance of the town. Beatrice Cox’s research contextualizes the town within the socioeconomic climate during its establishment and her thesis functions as a point of departure for my project to study and restore the Allensworth Cemetery. Recent scholarship by Orser, Franklin, Leone and others have both described and influenced the changing field of historical archaeology, especially in regard to African Americans, while work conducted at the Locust Grove Cemetery in Pennsylvania (Burg 2008), and the two cemeteries associated with First African Baptist Church of Philadelphia (McCarthy 2008) are models of successful African American cemetery restoration for me to strive to replicate at Allensworth. Blakey, Mullins, La Roche, McDavid and Stottman have demonstrated archaeology’s potential for civic engagement, self-reflexion and activism, while Barile and Morgan have pointed out issues of underrepresentation of African
American historic properties and data from African American descendant communities within the NRHP. It was my role to help bring the study and restoration of the Allensworth Cemetery into this scholarly climate. Since there is a distinct lack of African American cemetery projects conducted in collaboration with descendant communities in the West, this project constitutes a major step in filling that gap.
3. Research Methods

The objectives of this project were to determine the boundaries of the Allensworth Cemetery and to determine what this resource consists of, to ascertain its legal status, to investigate how the researcher could successfully collaborate with the Allensworth descendant community in a civically engaged way that contributed to social justice goals, and to determine the eligibility and necessary steps for the Allensworth Cemetery to be added to the National or State Registers. A wide variety of methods were used to complete this project. The research questions required different strategies to answer them, including archival research, geophysical and pedestrian survey, oral history interviews, and a variety of conversations and meetings with members of the Allensworth descendant community and other stakeholders.

My interest and involvement added momentum to earlier organizing and legal efforts by community members to improve the status of the Allensworth Cemetery (Montgomery 2017 personal communication; Visalia Times Delta 2002, 2008) (Figure 5).
Upon attending the 2016 Rededication at Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park, I became part of the Allensworth Historical Cemetery Collaborative Restoration Project (AHCCRP), which can be described as a grassroots effort to dignify and protect the cemetery. It continues the efforts of the 2013 Allensworth Historical Cemetery Campaign. AHCCRP
participants include the Bakersfield Education Chapter of the Friends of Allensworth, The Tulare Public Library, and other individuals who wish to improve the status of the Allensworth Cemetery. Some aspects of this thesis project involved working closely with members of AHCCRP, while other elements were done more independently.

Answering my first research question (Where are the boundaries of the Allensworth Cemetery and what does this resource consist of?) required archival research to look for the Allensworth Cemetery on plats, maps, and other archival records. Aerial photographs of the cemetery area proved to be important for showing its change in condition over time. A photo taken in 1941 was obtained from the Aerial Photography Collection of the University of California Santa Barbara, while photos from 1937 and 1956 were provided by Jonathan Waltmire of the Tulare County Library in Visalia. Ancestry.com and Newspapers.com provided some information on decedents in the Allensworth Cemetery.

The grant deed showing the transfer of the cemetery parcel to the Allensworth Cemetery Committee was obtained from the Tulare County Clerk-Recorder’s office in Visalia (Figure 6), as was a modern surveyors’ map showing the cemetery. This visit also provided an opportunity to speak with a knowledgeable employee about how the State might handle a property that is delinquent on taxes, as is the case with the Allensworth Cemetery parcel.
Figure 6. Grant deed showing the transfer of the cemetery parcel to the Allensworth Cemetery Committee.

I performed a records search was performed at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center at CSU Bakersfield to check whether there were any previously conducted studies in the area and to access documentation pertaining to Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. Another very important source of archival information was the files of Betty Rivers, a California Department of Parks and Recreation archaeologist who worked at Allensworth and who upon her death left her numerous files of Allensworth documentation and research to Beatrice Cox. Especially relevant resources from this collection were the transcripts from 1970s and 1980s interviews with Allensworth
pioneers, and previous research done on the Allensworth Cemetery, including a list of the names and dates of people known to have been buried there.

A pedestrian survey and site recording was carried out as well. The cemetery area was visually examined, photographed, and recorded. The location of headstones, mounds, depressions, and fencing were recorded with a Trimble XH GPS unit and mapped in GIS. Individual grave markers were photographed and any inscriptions recorded. Department of Parks and Recreation forms were completed and submitted to the California Historic Resources Inventory System.

In addition to the archival research and surface survey portions of this study, a section of the cemetery parcel was surveyed using ground penetrating radar (GPR). This was done as a pilot study to assess the effectiveness of using GPR to identify unmarked graves at the site. GPR generally is the most effective stand-alone method of remote sensing for subsurface features, although proton magnetometry has also proved useful in locating unmarked burials (Brock and Schwartz 1991; Conyers 2006; King et al. 1993). Factors influencing the applicability and accuracy of these methods include the presence of non-burial related metal debris and the depth of burials (King et al. 1993). GPR works by emitting regular pulses of electromagnetic energy. Underground soil layers, features and objects refract or reflect the energy in different ways and speeds. The signal that is returned is then recorded by a receiving antenna, with metal, other buried objects, and different soil interfaces visible as varying parabolic shapes. The resulting reflection profiles can be examined and interpreted. If the signal encounters a metal object such as coffin hardware or metal debris, the signal is blocked from reaching below the object, which reflects the signal back and creating a distinctive narrow ‘barber pole’ parabola in the
reflection profile. At the Allensworth Cemetery expected sources of metal objects are coffin hardware, grave decorations, and possibly agricultural or domestic debris. Therefore, graves can be expected to show up as a variety of parabolic shapes, including ‘barber poles.’ Moisture and salt content attenuate the signal; and other site-specific factors such as burial methods and burial age and taphonomy impact the results (Doolittle and Bellantoni 2010).

The soil of the Allensworth Cemetery is a Kimberlina fine sandy loam with 0-2% slopes (USDA:1992). It is part of the former bed of Tulare Lake and as such, it was expected to be bedded and sily (Brady 2017 personal communication). A Ramac 250MHz antenna with Mala software was used. This frequency results in low resolution (Hanes 2017 personal communication), but greater depth of penetration into the ground.

Each GPR transect results in a two-dimensional vertical image of the subsurface. These transect profiles were then viewed in GPR Viewer software. This software allows the user to remove or restore background noise in the image in order to better identify and view the parabolic reflections, which were presumed to be graves. These parabolas were then marked.

Since GPR surveys are time-intensive and the assessor’s parcel containing the burials is relatively large, the survey was limited to the northernmost one-third of the parcel, where graves were known to be. The GPR survey of the Allensworth Cemetery took place on June 9, 2017. A grid was laid out which measured 118 meters N/S by 42 meters E/W. Large metal nails were placed every two meters, with a length of string being attached north-south to guide the GPR operator. This method of stakes and string helped ensure even coverage of the survey area (Whitley 2017 personal communication). Each of the endpoints were recorded with a GeoXH Trimble GPS unit. The Velocity of the unit was
set at 100 meters per microsecond, or 0.1 meters per nanosecond. The Time Window was 61.3 nanoseconds, the Point Interval was 0.05 meters, the Sampling Frequency was 3,946.28 megahertz.

Survey began in the southwest corner, and a log was kept of the transect number, direction of travel, and relevant details pertaining to the transect such as proximity to the cemetery sign or to the modern burials. Once the data was collected, the first step was to determine the ratios of nanoseconds per meter and traces per meter so that the approximate depth and on-the-ground location of the various shapes in the reflection profiles could be established. The ratio of 0.1 meters per nanosecond meant that on the Y-axis, ten nanoseconds equates to 1 meter of depth. The GPR grid measured 118 meters N/S, which meant that on the X-axis there were 21 traces per meter, or that each increment of 400 traces represented 19 meters.

A GPR survey map was produced in GIS, showing the location and direction of the transects, so that selected reflection profiles could be viewed in the context of their spatial location. The reflection profiles were examined in the GPR Viewer computer program. The Remove Background tool was used, which had the effect of eliminating some of the horizontal lines representing ‘background clutter’ and making the remaining shapes more visible (Figures 7-8).
Parabolic shapes, which most likely represented burials, were identified and marked, as were the ‘barber pole’ reflections that signified the presence of a metal object.

To answer my second research question (What is the legal status of the Allensworth Cemetery?), it was necessary to research the legal context in which the Allensworth Cemetery was founded, and to identify the applicable laws. It appears that the Allensworth Cemetery was intended to be a Public Cemetery District, as per the California Cemetery Tax Law of 1921. As the current California Public Cemetery District law (2003) states,
The Legislature authorized the creation of public cemetery districts in 1909 to assume responsibility for the ownership, improvement, expansion, and operation of cemeteries and the provision of interment services from fraternal, pioneer, religious, social, and other organizations that were unable to provide for those cemeteries [Health and Safety Code, Division 8. Cemeteries Part 4. Public Cemetery Districts Chapter 1. General provisions 9001 (a)(2)].

On June 1, 1921, the law was amended with an Act which set out the process of establishing public cemetery districts (Statutes of California 1921:1103). According to Section 5, if a petition for one was approved by the board of supervisors,

Such cemetery district shall be governed and managed by three trustees, appointed by the board of supervisors from electors residing therein. The trustees shall hold office for four years and until the appointment and qualification of their successors, and shall be complete [Statutes of California 1921:1104].

With this understanding of what a public cemetery district is and how it works, I examined whether or not the Allensworth Cemetery in fact had this status. I performed deed research at the Tulare County Assessor’s Office in Visalia and consulted the Tulare County Grand Jury Report of 2007-2008, a document which assesses cemeteries in Tulare County and was available online. I also communicated with Tulare County Supervisor Pete Vander Poel and Tulare County Board of Supervisors Chief of Staff Julieta Martinez.
regarding the Allensworth Cemetery. They provided me a copy of a 2008 report on the Allensworth Cemetery’s legal status, written by the Tulare County Legal Counsel (Bales-Lange 2008).

While archival and geophysical methods could be relied upon to deliver clear-cut answers regarding the Allensworth Cemetery’s boundaries, current condition, inventory and current legal status, the process of learning about how to effectively collaborate with the Allensworth descendant community in a way that furthers their goals and focuses on social justice (the third research question) was far more complex. Transcripts of previously conducted interviews, as well as my own interviews and conversations, were all used to try to answer this question.

Eleanor Ramsey, as part of her Ph.D. dissertation process, interviewed twenty Allensworth pioneers, most of whom settled there prior to 1915 (1977:5). Segments of these interview transcripts are included in her dissertation, and California Department of Parks and Recreation employees also recorded interviews during the 1970s and 1980s as they worked to design and reconstruct a portion of the town during the establishment of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. These interview transcripts were examined for mentions of the Allensworth Cemetery, and indeed they contribute much data on the perspectives of Allensworth pioneers who are now deceased, as well as valuable data on the cemetery, and on the pioneers’ views of it.

However, since the descendant community of Allensworth are the main group of people affected by this cemetery research, this community was the primary source for answering my third research question. The Allensworth descendant community belongs to a large and diverse group of stakeholders, which includes current and former residents of
Allensworth and their descendants, members of the Friends of Allensworth organization, California Department of Parks and Recreation employees, and visitors to the park. The oral history component of this project, in addition to being a form of research, functioned as a mode of community outreach and helped raise awareness about the Allensworth Historical Cemetery Collaborative Restoration Project.

Speaking with members of the descendant community and learning their stories has multiple benefits as storytelling has great social value as well data potential. Social work professor and international lecturer Joy DeGruy, (2005), who educates on how the trauma of slavery continues to influence the behavior of her African American community writes, “Telling our stories can be redemptive. Telling our stories can free us. Telling our stories can help lift others up... Story telling is an important part of our education; it strengthens us and helps us build resilience” (DeGruy 2005:206).

In preparation for conducting interviews I applied to the Sonoma State Institutional Review Board and my application was approved as Category A-2 Exempt (Appendix A). I interviewed four members of the Allensworth descendant community, as well as one additional stakeholder, the Manager of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. I used Snowball Sampling to identify potential interviewees who belonged to the Allensworth descendant community. This method involves finding at least one key individual and meeting other potential interviewees through that individual (Bernard 2002:185). The number of interviews (five) represented a feasible number given the timeline and logistical issues of this project, and in consideration of the other forms of data collection that were performed during this project. The interviews I conducted are by no means intended to be a statistically representative sample of the Allensworth descendant and/or stakeholder
communities. However, a high priority was given to interviewing both male and female
descendant community members, and including both a lineal descendant of original
Allensworth settlers and more recent arrivals to Allensworth who currently reside there.

The first step in the formal interview process was to go over the informed consent
form with the interviewee and sign it with them. This form reiterated the purpose of the
interview and reminded the participant of their rights to withdraw participation, to
document their choice on what the information from the interview could be used for, and
their choice on whether or not to remain anonymous. Interview questions centered on the
cemetery, but expanded to other areas based upon the interviewee and their background.

An Olympus digital audio recorder was used to record interviews and transcriptions
were completed with the help of VirtualDJ software. This resulted in a Word document
corresponding to each interviewee, which could be reviewed for content that was
particularly relevant in terms of answering my research questions.

Informal conversations with these interviewees and with other community
members were a major source of data, as well, and a source of guidance regarding the
direction that this thesis project took. Meetings and conversations with members of the
Allensworth descendant community took place at several different events which were put
on by the Park and the Friends of Allensworth (the Annual Rededication in October 2016,
the Black History Month event in February 2017, the Old Time Jubilee in May 2017, and the
Juneteenth Celebration in June 2017, and the Annual Rededication on October 2017).
‘Unofficial’ events where I interacted with members of the descendant community were the
birthday celebration of David Pierro, held in Roseville in November 2016, and a Dignity for
the Historical Allensworth Cemetery event in April 2017 that included time spent out at the
cemetery as well as a meeting in the Allensworth Community Center (Figure 9).

Communications took place via phone and email as well.

Figure 9. Meeting in the Allensworth Community Center. From left to right: Carnell Montgomery Jr., Rebecca Kemp, Astaria Pierro, Travis Pfohl, Erica Thompson, Ralph Pierro. Photograph by Christopher Anderson.

Before I met members of the descendant community my ideas were centered around establishing the actual location of the cemetery, erecting a fence and an interpretive plaque, determining the extent of the burials and perhaps even being able to identify individuals buried in unmarked graves by means of archival and/or bioarchaeological research. However, speaking with descendant community members revealed that in fact a fence had already been erected and subsequently stolen. Carnell Montgomery (2017 personal communication) stated that he had people he could go to for potentially raising more funds to make another one, so that was not an immediate need or necessary research
goal. In terms of the boundaries, deed research readily revealed the dimensions of the cemetery parcel, while examination of archival aerial photographs and the use of GPR helped indicate the extent of the burials. Some community members expressed interest in there being a plaque of some sort with the names of the individuals known to be interred in the Allensworth Cemetery, while the failure to find an early original document stating the names and locations of all of the burials there made it impossible to identify the individuals in the unmarked graves.

While archival research of previously conducted interviews helped elucidate the cemetery’s change in condition over time, my own conversations with members of the Allensworth community focused more on their wishes for what happens to the cemetery in terms of restoration and planning, as well as helping me to understand the political and social climate surrounding the establishment of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. These conversations were also a way to explore the impacts that racialization in the past and present has on the preservation of the town of Allensworth and on the lives of the Allensworth descendant community.

Community partners also indicated further directions of research. For example, interviewees referred to struggles against environmental racism in which they had participated in the past, or encouraged me to be aware of other instances of racial discrimination such as the Black Farmer’s Lawsuit. The Black Farmer’s Lawsuit refers to a pair of class-action lawsuits filed in the late 1990s, which asserted that the United States Department of Agriculture had denied loans and other forms of assistance to Black farmers based on their race (Brown 2013). The case was decided in favor of the farmers. I made
efforts to recognize and amplify connections between past and present as a way to make this project more relevant to current social justice goals.

Some aspects of this project are by nature more or less collaborative than others, a fact that might be seen as limiting or undermining the collaborative nature of the project. For example, the collection and especially the interpretation of GPR data is under the purview of the ‘professional,’ as was evaluation of the Allensworth Cemetery in terms of National and California Register criteria. Descendant community members were, however, present during fieldwork. These conversations helped boost collaboration in other aspects of the project by getting to know each other better and helping to develop relationships, and these conversations and interactions were an effective way for me to receive direction.

While the numerous publications described in the Literature Review speak to the importance of archaeologists’ political and social awareness as they participate in their work, not many of these works provided concrete methods of measuring public engagement. Sherry Arnstein, who worked in the fields of medical and public policy, published a seminal paper that laid out a model known as the Ladder of Citizen Participation as a way of gauging the nature of community involvement in public agency projects (1969:217). Arnstein’s model depicts spectrum of participation, with eight different rungs represent different levels of citizen power. These rungs are subdivided into three groups: ‘Nonparticipation’ at the bottom, ‘Degrees of tokenism’ in the middle, and ‘Degrees of citizen power’ at the top. She notes that while Consultation, the level below Partnership, is a valid step, “… this rung of the ladder is still a sham since it offers no assurance that citizen concerns and ideas will be taken into account” (Arnstein 1969:219). While this gauge is geared towards rating relationships in which there is an inherent power
imbalance—for example, the relationship between citizens and federal programs—it was still useful in assessing the more equal relationship I had with the Allensworth descendant community. Alternatively, the relationship can be seen as not between the descendant community and myself, but between the descendant community and the research. I aimed for the top three levels of participation: ‘Partnership, Delegated power, and Citizen control.’ Arnstein (1969:217) states that in the top two levels, Delegated Power and Citizen Control, “…citizens obtain the majority of decision-making seats, or full managerial power.” I employed this metric while analyzing the levels of success in collaborating with the Allensworth descendant community.

The final research question, developed in consultation with members of the Allensworth descendant community was, how might the Allensworth Cemetery gain formal status, namely a place on the NRHP or the various California Registers? Answering this involved researching the evaluation criteria for the designations of National Historic District, NRHP Property, California Historical Landmark and Point of Historical Interest, and comparing the criteria for these registration programs against the historic research done on the Allensworth Cemetery as well as my evaluation of the resources. I also attended the July 2017 meeting of the State Historic Resources Commission in San Rafael, where I gained a better understanding of the NRHP nomination process and spoke to California State Historian II Amy Crain and Registration Unit Supervisor Jay Correia.

The methods described above yielded a variety of different types of information and supplied answers to my research questions. The results that I obtained were analyzed in a way that I hoped would yield information that was both useful and relevant to the Allensworth descendant committee.
4. Results

Introduction

As described in Chapter 3, a wide variety of methods were used to determine the boundaries of the Allensworth Cemetery and establish what the resource consists of, to investigate its history and current legal status, to make the project relevant to current social justice goals, to find out how to successfully collaborate with the Allensworth descendant community, and to examine the Allensworth Cemetery’s eligibility for inclusion in the National and California Registers. Since the overarching goal of this thesis project was to collaborate with the descendant community, I begin by giving an overview of the members of this community with whom I interacted. I then describe the archival and archaeological data, my findings on the Allensworth Cemetery’s current legal status, information about the cemetery gained from the archival interviews and the interviews that I participated in, and recommendations on how to make a project such as this relevant to social justice goals. Then, I state my assessment of the eligibility of the Allensworth Cemetery for inclusion in the various Registers: the NRHP, the California Historical Landmarks register, the register of California Points of Historical Interest, and the California Inventory of Historic Resources.

Archival Evidence: Cemetery Boundaries

The boundaries of the Allensworth cemetery parcel were determined by means of deed research of the Tulare County Assessor, in person and online. Beginning in 2005 the Allensworth Cemetery parcel was assigned Assessor’s Parcel Number 333-370-008. Prior to that the number was 333-162-007; the number was changed when the parcel was
remapped. The parcel is labeled as the Allensworth Cemetery on the official modern surveyor/assessor maps and is searchable in ParcelQuest. The parcel is rectangular in shape and measures approximately 160 feet by 1300 feet, with an approximate area of five acres. It consists of the western half of Lot 15, Tract 15 of the California Colony Home Promoting Association, which was formed by Colonel Allensworth and his colleagues (Figure 10).

Figure 10. 1908 plat map showing the western half of Lot 15 which became the Allensworth Cemetery.
Archival Evidence: Aerial Photographs

It appears that only the northernmost one-third or so of the long, rectangular cemetery parcel was actually used as a cemetery, as visible in aerial photographs taken in 1937 (Figure 11), 1941 (Figure 12) and 1956 (Figure 13).

Figure 11. Portion of aerial photograph showing the Allensworth Cemetery, taken in 1937. Photograph on file at the Tulare County Library.
Figure 12. Portion of aerial photograph showing the Allensworth Cemetery taken in 1941. Photograph on file at the Aerial Imagery Research Service, University of California Santa Barbara.
Figure 13. Portion of aerial photograph showing the Allensworth Cemetery taken in 1956. Photograph on file at the Tulare County Library.
Individual graves are difficult to make out in these images, but look like spots in the northernmost third of the parcel. These photos are also important because in it the entire parcel of land looks distinct from the surrounding area. In modern aerial images, on the other hand, only the northern third or so of the parcel is visibly different from the surrounding parcels (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Modern aerial showing the Allensworth Cemetery. Google 2017.
Archival Evidence: Decedents in the Allensworth Cemetery

I compiled a list of historical burials in the Allensworth Cemetery (Figure 15). The bulk of this came from a list researched by Vera Botelho, a researcher hired by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. The earliest birth date found was 1837 and the earliest death date was 1911 (Botelho n.d.). The list functions to convey what basic information is known about the decedents buried in the Allensworth Cemetery, as well as the best estimate of the number of individuals buried there in historic times.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birth Date</th>
<th>Death Date</th>
<th>On Botelho list</th>
<th>On Ramsey list</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Headstone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ferdonia Armstrong</td>
<td>11/14/1932</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emory Thomas Buntly</td>
<td>1/9/1936</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariiah Bush</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>3/30/1918</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milliard Bush</td>
<td>11/2/1921</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fannie Byrd</td>
<td>5/10/1871</td>
<td>3/23/1933</td>
<td>x, x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josie Coachman</td>
<td>1868</td>
<td>4/15/1926 or 1946</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Coleman</td>
<td>1/31/1916</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsie Casey</td>
<td>1866</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velma E. Carrington</td>
<td>1/20/1923</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollie (Doby) Davis</td>
<td>1/10/1920</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter L. Dotson</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>5/23/1912</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma Powell Dry</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>2/2/1912</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Franklin Grigsby</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>8/3/1915</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary M. Gross</td>
<td>1866</td>
<td>11/2/1918</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Alexander Hackett</td>
<td>1857</td>
<td>1/1/1924</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice Hickerson Hackett</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennie Haley</td>
<td>11/14/1918</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria or Maria Herculano</td>
<td>5/13/1914</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zebedee Hindman</td>
<td>1872</td>
<td>4/11/1950</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Johnson</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>9/5/1922 or 9/7/1922</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Jordan</td>
<td>10/9/1941</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May King</td>
<td>11/14/1918</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addison W. Lacy</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regiana H. Mattox</td>
<td>1/17/1924</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patsy Marshall</td>
<td>1837</td>
<td>2/2/1912</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriel R. Middleton</td>
<td>3/19/1923</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue New</td>
<td>7/24/1931</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Pierson</td>
<td>7/1/1882</td>
<td>4/15/1926</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos Powell</td>
<td>1/19/1914</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Rainbow</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>4/24/1920</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimrod Rainbow</td>
<td>1866</td>
<td>11/15/1920</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Scott</td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>2/8/1930</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Walter Singleton</td>
<td>4/1/1866</td>
<td>5/4/1928</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanny Elma Smith</td>
<td>11/28/1928</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank A. Smith</td>
<td>1852</td>
<td>11/8/1911</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura A. Smith</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Cornelius Smith</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>4/9/1912</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Wells</td>
<td>10/1/1914</td>
<td>10/1/1914</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Stilborn/Infant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Nelson Wells</td>
<td>5/5/1895</td>
<td>1/6/1949</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elvia Odessie Woods</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>6/9/1917</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Phillips</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FOA list</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birdie Phillips</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FOA list</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 15. Known historic burials in the Allensworth Cemetery.
Multiple members of the descendant community expressed interest in the presence of Buffalo Soldiers in the Allensworth Cemetery. One Allensworth Buffalo Soldier, Oscar Overr served as a First Sergeant in the Kansas Volunteer Infantry in 1898 and 1899 (Registration Card of Oscar Olen Overr, 1918). He was originally believed to have been buried in the Allensworth Cemetery (Friends of Allensworth 2016; Findagrave.com), but he in fact appears in the ledger of those buried in the Los Angeles National Cemetery in 1939 (Ancestry.com). Sergeant James Phillips, who served in the 24th Infantry (Muller 1972) and fought in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War, is believed to be buried in the Allensworth Cemetery (Friends of Allensworth 2016).

Another African American veteran buried in the Allensworth Cemetery is Charles Wells, who entered the military in 1917 (Figure 16). He was part of Company I of the 815th Pioneer Infantry (Ancestry.com). On October 11, 1918, he set sail on the Army Transport Ship Maui from Hoboken NJ (Ancestry.com). In 1919, he returned to the United States from Brest, France aboard the US Army Transport ship Aeolus (Ancestry.com). As the documentation shows, the Allensworth Cemetery is known to contain the graves of veterans, individuals normally believed by society to be especially worthy of a dignified resting place.
While the ‘lost’ locations of James Phillips and other decedents will likely never be known, archival evidence was, however, able to shed some light on the timeframe of the Allensworth Cemetery’s decline over the years.

Archival Evidence: Interviews

In addition to visual evidence, interviews recorded by Department of Parks and Recreation employees in the 1970s and 1980s shed light on the cemetery’s history. While much of these conversations concerned specifics regarding the layout of the town and the architecture and furnishings of the houses, the contents of the yards and businesses, and identifying individuals in old photos, the cemetery got several mentions. These interviews indicated that the cemetery had been vandalized and fallen into disrepair by the 1970s.
An interview with Henry Singleton and Helatha Smith in 1976 revealed both information on the cemetery’s physical status over time, and the former Allensworth resident’s opinion on its preservation status. They state:

There’s still a fence around it. It’s still there. I think that would be a good project for the Allensworth Committee to look into, fixing that up. I imagine it’s pretty well run down. It is. There are only about 3 or 4 of the headstones still left and those are the ones done in marble and then there are a few of the old, on little wooden stakes and they were little metal plates that had the persons name and date but those are so rusted that you can’t tell whose they were. But somebody should have records on that. We should be able to find out all those names [Singleton and Smith 1976].

Other interviewees corroborated the assessment that the cemetery was in poor condition by the 1970s. In a 1983 interview Ethel Coleman Thomas (1983a:34) stated, “we went up there a couple of times to decorate the graves, and that’s when I got so disgusted because there were holes and there were cows all over the graveyard.” In another interview, conducted on February 28\textsuperscript{th} of 1983, Thomas (1983b:49-50) asked, “Is most of that land still run, taken over by the Phillips?” Ms. Thomas was undoubtedly referring to the white Phillips family who lived nearby and bought up much of the land in the Allensworth area. The interviewer confirmed this, and Thomas said, “All right. Isn’t that out where the cemetery is, too?” The interviewer responded, “Yeah. Some of the cemetery is also under cultivation.” Coleman Thomas responded, “Yes. Well, it was on its way the last time we went because we used to go up on Memorial Day, as long as my Uncle Bill was
living” (Thomas 1983b:49-50). The implication that the cemetery visits went on as long as a certain person was alive mirrors the common trend of connection to a burial place lasting until a key person dies.

Eleanor Ramsey interviewed Joe Durel on February 15, 1976 in Los Angeles. The conversation jumps around quite a bit, and indicates that the issue of ownership may have been convoluted even then. When asked who is buried there, Mr. Durel answered,

Every Negro that died while I was over there is buried there.”

Ramsey: “Do you know anybody’s name we could look for on the …”

Durel: “No, I would have to ask the Rainbow family”

Ramsey: “Did they run the cemetery?”

Durel: “No, nobody ran the cemetery, they just dug a hole and put you in there.”

Ramsey: “Who owned the ground?”

Durel: “City of Allensworth... what was I going after, now? [Durel 1976:44].

Winmark Smith, a relative of original Cemetery Committee member Laura Smith, also spoke about the cemetery in a 1983 interview. The interviewer asked, “Tell us about the cemetery—who is buried there and who did the grave digging?” “I can’t remember who is buried there, honey, cause I just did the hauling—I had the truck to haul them to the dam [sic] graveyard and we’d dig a hole and bury them...” (Smith 1983:46). Smith (1983:39) also indicated that plowing had disturbed the cemetery: “Some of—well, it appears that some of them were plowed up. Because you, there are more people buried then there are depressions in the space that’s still there.” Additionally, he described having a hard time
finding the cemetery. The interviewer described how to get there, and Smith stated, “Yeah, that’s right. But we went out there, and we couldn't find it.”

As mentioned earlier, Allensworth descendant community members have made efforts in recent times to research and protect the Allensworth Cemetery (Florez 2002). In an interview published in the Visalia Times Delta Parnell Lovelace stated, “The very people who struggled for our freedom lay right here in this soil and to let that be forgotten is a disgrace to this country, this state and this country’s history. I will not be powerless in permitting a country to forget” (Florez 2002).

As described below, the archaeological evidence corroborates the oral histories in terms of the Allensworth Cemetery’s decline over time.

Archeological Evidence: Relevant Previous Archeological Studies

In 1982, a pedestrian survey and auger tests were performed prior to the construction of the Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park’s campground, with no significant cultural material found (California DPR:TU-633). A records search showed that several archaeological studies had been done in the area. In 2009, a pedestrian survey was conducted on a parcel located 165 feet to the east of the Allensworth Cemetery; no cultural resources were identified (Gold 2009).

Archeological Evidence: Site Recording

As part of this project the Allensworth Cemetery was surveyed and recorded as an archaeological site on April 9, 2017. The site was mapped in the field with a Trimble XH GPS unit. The mounds, depressions, extant headstones, and wooden crosses were
photographed and recorded. The site was mapped in GIS, and California Department of Parks and Recreation Primary Records were prepared and submitted to the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center.

In terms of aboveground resources, little is present. There are grave markers and a few areas of modern fencing, as well as wooden sign reading ‘Allensworth Historical Cemetery Est. 1911’, and several small modern wooden crosses arranged in two rows. The Allensworth Cemetery is in poor condition. The grave markers which are no longer present could have deteriorated over time, been removed, or been destroyed by farming equipment. Disturbances to the site consist of cow tracks, agricultural planting, and vehicle tracks.

*Archaeological Evidence: GPR results*

The results of the GPR survey were somewhat unclear. Once the reflection profiles were examined and the probable locations of graves were marked, it appeared that the western portion of the cemetery lacks burials, while the burials present in the eastern portion were at approximately 4 to 6 feet in depth. Selected reflection profiles are included below, with their locations and directions shown on the aerial (Figure 17).
Figure 17. Aerial photo of the Allensworth Cemetery showing the location and direction of selected reflection profiles.
In the reflection profiles displayed below, ten nanoseconds represent one meter of depth and 400 Traces represents approximately 19 meters. The red dots represent the probable locations of graves, where the differing soil interfaces, coffin components, or human remains themselves show up as parabolas (Figures 18-21). Metal objects, such as coffin hardware, show up as a specific kind of parabola, known as a 'barber pole' (Figure 18, Figure 20).

Figure 18. Reflection profile 15, moving from north to south, with the probable locations of graves marked in red.
Figure 19. Reflection profile 31, moving from north to south, with the probable locations of graves marked in red.

Figure 20. Reflection profile 39, moving from north to south, with the probable locations of graves marked in red.
As mentioned above, the GPR prospection described here represents a preliminary or pilot study of the efficacy of using this method at the Allensworth Cemetery. The results indicated that GPR is a moderately effective, noninvasive method for determining belowground disturbances (graves) in this context. The GPR survey suggested that the graves within the Allensworth Cemetery, represented by differing soil or object interfaces, are visible as parabolic shapes in the reflection profiles. The results that were obtained are partial and were not ground-truthed: further research could better identify the unmarked graves.

Factors which likely limited the usefulness of this GPR study included the age of the equipment, my own lack of experience with processing and interpreting the results, and the relatively low frequency of the antenna. The frequency of the antenna’s radio transmissions (250MHz) resulted in deep penetration of the ground, but with a lower resolution than would be achieved by a higher frequency antenna. The 250MHz frequency may be better suited for geological applications, while antennae with higher frequencies are often used.
for archaeological applications (Conyers 2012; Sunseri and Byram 2017). Specifically, 350 or 400 MHz antennae represent a good compromise between depth of penetration and quality of resolution (Byram 2017 personal communication).

This GPR study did confirm that the environmental and taphonomic conditions of the Allensworth Cemetery are amenable to GPR survey. If further GPR work were to be performed, more precise or definitive results could be achieved with the use of a higher-frequency antenna for better resolution and if the reflection profiles were processed and evaluated by a person with a higher level of expertise than myself.

Legal status

While it was important to document the elements that are present at the Allensworth Cemetery, it was arguably even more crucial to determine the cemetery’s legal status. This was done by performing archival research to determine the chain of ownership over time and by researching tax information about the property. The legal ownership status of the Allensworth is understood uncertainly by many.

The Allensworth Cemetery consists of the western half of Lot 15, Tract 15 of the California Colony and Home Promoting Association. While the cemetery receives no funds for its upkeep or maintenance, the Board of Supervisors decided whether the three most recent burials (1991, 1992 and 2013) could take place on a case-by-case basis. One community member stated wryly that one needs to die at the right time, given the seemingly arbitrary nature of the Board of Supervisor’s decision-making process. In an email, a Supervisor stated that the Board of Supervisors had to be approached for the
permit to bury because there was no other governing body. The Park Supervisor was contacted regarding this as well (Ptomey 2017).

The Tulare County Assessor’s records show that on November 9th, 1918 Ralph P. Gage sold the cemetery parcel to the “Allensworth Cemetery Committee, J. A. Heckett, J. W. Singleton and Laura Smith.” for ten dollars. Mr. Hackett filed the deed at the Tulare County Courthouse in Visalia on June 25th, 1921, shortly after the passage of the California Cemetery Tax Law was passed on June 1st of the same year. This indicates the committee’s attention to the law and their diligence in taking the appropriate step to securely establish the cemetery within the proper legal framework.

Evidently, though, the forms necessary to make it a public cemetery district were never actually filed. The precise nature of this error is not known. The 2007-2008 Tulare County Grand Jury report discusses their findings on the Allensworth cemetery. They state, “While researching the many small graveyards in Tulare County it came to our attention that no one was responsible for the upkeep of this cemetery. Somehow over the past 75 years, the Allensworth Cemetery slipped through the cracks” (Tulare County Grand Jury 2008:47). Due to this error, the cemetery remained in private ownership during its period of significance. By 1935 the three members of the founding cemetery committee were all deceased and buried in the Allensworth Cemetery (Botelho n.d.).

In 1978, the Tulare County Tax Assessors Office, with no clear cause, changed the title for the property to Tulare County Cemetery District, which made the parcel tax free (Grand Jury 2008:48). The 2007-2008 Tulare County Grand Jury Report states:

Sometime in the early 1900’s it was ASSUMED that the proper paperwork, the
California Cemetery Tax Law of 1921, had been filed to make the property a Cemetery District. IT WAS NOT.

Another ASSUMPTION was made in 1978, when the Tax Assessors Office changed the title to Tulare Public Cemetery District. This made the property TAX FREE. There are no records available to verify any reason for that change to be made. At this time there is a cloud on the title, so no one is responsible for the deplorable condition this “graveyard” is in [Tulare County Grand Jury 2008:48].

In the document quoted above, the Tulare County Civil Grand Jury put pressure on the Tulare County Board of Supervisors to look into the issue of the Allensworth Cemetery. Under “Recommendations” they stated, “The Tulare county Board of Supervisors should review any questionable situation in their district. (Example: Allensworth)[original emphasis]” (Tulare County Grand Jury 2008:48).

In February of 2008 the Tulare County Counsel released a letter detailing their findings regarding the ownership and legal options for the Allensworth (Bales-Lange 2008). The letter states that the title change “was apparently done under the mistaken assumption that the original owner was a cemetery district which had been absorbed by the Tulare district in the 1940s. It certainly was not based on any recorded deed” (Bales-Lange 2008:2).

Also in 2008, the Assessor changed the listing from Tulare County Cemetery District back to “Allensworth Cemetery Committee, J. A. Heckett, J. W. Singleton and Laura Smith.” This had the effect of making the cemetery lot taxable. Although the Allensworth Cemetery is eligible for tax-exempt status as per California Rev. & Tax. Code, § 256, an annual affidavit
is required to certify its non-profit status. Since there is no owners’ address to which the Tulare County Assessor can send this affidavit renewal reminder notice, the cemetery began being taxed, beginning in the 2008-2009 year. The legal review letter states,

The assessor has indicated that the taxes on the cemetery will be minimal, but if someone (such as a local resident or nonprofit entity) paid the taxes, and took other actions to care for the cemetery (such as fencing it in), that person could, after five years of this, potentially claim title by adverse possession. (Code Civ. Proc., § 325.) [Bales-Lange 2008:4].

The other two options for attainment of private ownership of the Allensworth Cemetery involve quiet title actions. This would consist of a suit brought to court, which would establish the right of an individual or individuals, or an organization to the property. The legal letter concluded,

The County has no legal responsibility for either the Allensworth Cemetery or the underlying real property. Until the ownership is clarified, your Board cannot enforce any ordinances requiring the owner of a cemetery to maintain it properly. Thus, the local residents should focus their efforts on quieting title in a new owner. Ideally, the ultimate owner should be a nonprofit corporation with an endowment sufficient for future maintenance of the cemetery [Bales-Lange 2008:6].
In an email to me, the Chief of Staff of the Tulare County Board of Supervisors stated that if the Allensworth Community Service District wished to become the owners of the cemetery they would need to be authorized by the Local Agency Formation Commission, provided that change would not be overridden by the voters of Tulare County (Martinez email correspondence 2017).

A search of recent tax bills for the cemetery parcel was conducted through the Tulare County Auditor-Controller website. The assessed value of the parcel varied quite a bit between years. For example, the 2011 Tax Statement states that the assessed value of the land is $2,380, with structural improvements valued at $368, while the 2015 tax bill lists the value of the land at $2,000, with no improvements. All bills include a Warning: “Unpaid Delinquent Taxes Loss of Property Possible,” and state “Defaulted 06-30-09.” It is unclear whether the structural improvements values refer to the cemetery sign, or to the headstones. If an individual or organization were to take the necessary steps to become the owner of the Allensworth Cemetery, this may be a good question for them to bring up before they pay the taxes.

Thus, the current legal owners of the Allensworth Cemetery parcel are: “Allensworth Cemetery Committee, J. A. Heckett, J. W. Singleton and Laura Smith.” Some form of legal action (as described above) is needed before a living person or organization can become the owner of the cemetery.

Interactions with Members of the Allensworth Descendant Community

Individuals who are most involved in the efforts to preserve the cemetery are those who live at or near Allensworth and/or those who have relatives more recently buried
there. These individuals are not descendants of the original Allensworth pioneers, but moved to Allensworth in the mid to late 2000s. As mentioned earlier, the majority of the original Allensworth residents left during the early-to-mid 20th century. The modern town of Allensworth, located adjacent to the southern border of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park is inhabited by mainly Hispanic/Latino residents. The makeup of the group most closely involved in efforts to restore and preserve the Allensworth Cemetery appears to be consistent with the general reality of time and distance being the main factors which determine descendants’ level of connection to historic cemeteries. In addition to meeting, speaking and collaborating with these individuals, I was able to meet and interview the lineal descendant of an Allensworth pioneer who is buried in the Allensworth Cemetery. In general, these descendant community members share the Allensworth pioneers’ values of education, community involvement and community uplift.

_Carnell Montgomery._ Carnell Montgomery (Figure 22) is active in the Bakersfield Education Chapter of the Friends of Allensworth, and he is the Friends of Allensworth Volunteer Committee Chairman. He worked for many years as a teacher and counselor at the Kern High School District. I first met Mr. Montgomery at the 2016 Rededication at Allensworth. I attended the event with Beatrice Cox, who had been in contact with him beforehand. He greeted us when we arrived and introduced me to several Allensworth community members. It is he who organized the Allensworth Historical Cemetery Collaborative Restoration Project and scheduled the workday at the cemetery. During the next year or so we met up in person at events and sent numerous emails back and forth
exchanging information about the cemetery, coordinating, and giving each other updates about our progress.

Figure 22. Carnell Montgomery (at right), with Beatrice Cox (far left) and visiting members of the Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Club. Photograph by the author.

The Pierro Family. Members of the Pierro family whom I worked most closely with included brothers Sam, David and Ralph, and Ralph’s son R.B. I recorded interviews with Sam and David. The Pierro family came to California from Oklahoma. Before that, their ancestors lived in Louisiana. The family moved to Allensworth from Bakersfield in 1953 and they have three relatives buried in the Allensworth Cemetery (in 1991, 1992, and 2013). In Bakersfield, the family had been living on a farm that was owned in common with about six other families. Each family had an acre of their own, while the majority of the acreage was farmed in common. Jefferson Pierro (the father of Sam, David and Ralph), moved the family because he was looking for access for more land to raise cattle, and
because he wanted to raise his children in a better environment (David Pierro 2017).

Jefferson was on the Allensworth Steering Committee which was consulted with by California State Parks as they developed the plan for the reconstruction of a portion of the downtown (Sam Pierro 2017).

Sam Pierro, ‘The Allensworth Artist,” is a painter. Many of Mr. Pierro’s works focus on civil rights themes and include portraits of Barack Obama, Martin Luther King Jr., and Colonel Allen Allensworth (Figure 23). He also made the metal cross that marks the grave of his mother in the Allensworth Cemetery (Figure 24). Sam was born in 1953, the same year that the family arrived in Allensworth. He remembers playing as a kid around the abandoned Baptist Church building. He safeguarded some of the pews, and returned them once the church was reconstructed. As part of the schedule of events at the 2017 Juneteenth celebration Sam gave a powerful recitation of Martin Luther King Jr.’s ‘I have a dream’ speech.
Figure 23. Painting of Colonel Allen Allensworth by Sam Pierro hanging in the Allensworth Community Center. Photograph by the author.
Figure 24. Photograph of Pierro family graves taken in 2002. Photograph by Beatrice Cox.

David Pierro lives in Fresno. After getting out of the Army he spent some time working in Bakersfield and then moved to Fresno to study Industrial Arts at Fresno State University. While getting his degree he worked as a fireman on the Santa Fe Railroad and became the first Black engineer to work for the company whose decision to move its depot away from Allensworth had dealt such a blow to the community.

Ralph Sr. lives in San Luis Obispo. He worked as a teacher for the Delano High School District. His son R.B. has had multiple jobs including that of computer programmer. He lives in Delano.
**Penny Singleton-Eldridge.** Ms. Penny Singleton-Eldridge was the one lineal descendant of an original Allensworth pioneer that I interviewed. She is the granddaughter of Allensworth pioneer Joshua A. Singleton, who is buried in the Allensworth Cemetery (Appendix B). She is the great-granddaughter of Benjamin “Pap” Singleton, famous for organizing groups of African Americans to leave the South following Reconstruction to found several planned communities. Ms. Singleton-Eldridge’s grandfather owned and operated a store, and served as Postmaster (Ramsey 1977:161). Ms. Singleton-Eldridge lives in Los Angeles but visits Allensworth once a year, generally for the Rededication in October. Ms. Singleton-Eldridge’s father had in fact been interviewed in the 1970s by Eleanor Ramsey for her Ph.D. dissertation and by California Department of Parks and Recreation for as part of the reconstruction process, and I was able to provide her with copies of these interview transcripts to have and to pass on.

**The Morrison and Kadara family.** Carnell Montgomery also introduced me to Ms. Nettie Morrison, known as the Unofficial Mayor of Allensworth, her daughter Denise and her son-in-law Kayode (Figure 25). Ms. Morrison came from Texas to Allensworth in the late 1970s. In her appearance in a 2007 documentary (Harris 2007), she stated, “I had no idea such a place existed, and I just fell in love with it and I wanted to become part of [sic], and that’s how I ended up in Allensworth” (Harris 2007). Ms. Morrison founded the Friends of Allensworth in 1982 and has spent several decades working to organize and advocate for the local community. In 2011, the Tulare County Board of Supervisors issued a proclamation honoring her for her dedication and service.
Ms. Morrison’s daughter Denise Kadara moved to Allensworth in 2010 after retiring from over 25 years working as a senior planner, analyst, and consultant for the cities of San Bernardino and Los Angeles, and San Mateo County. She is currently the president of the 501(c)(3) Allensworth Progressive Association. Denise’s husband Kayode is also heavily involved in community development and advocacy. He serves on the Tulare County Water Commission, the Allensworth School Board, the Deer Creek Storm Water Board and the Tri-County Water Authority Board, and the board of directors of Self-Help Enterprises.

Figure 25. From left to right: Kayode Kadara, Nettie Morrison, Denise Kadara, and Beatrice Cox, in front of the Allensworth School. Photo by the author.

The individuals that I met with at Allensworth — Carnell Montgomery, the Pierros, Nettie Morrison and the Kadaras — all became involved with the town of Allensworth at some point within the past half century or so. Although their family connections are not as temporally deep as many other Allensworth descendants, it was they who I interacted most
as we worked to discuss and make progress in preserving and protecting the Allensworth Cemetery. The fact that the Pierro family and Ms. Singleton-Eldridge have relatives buried in the Allensworth Cemetery makes their claims as stakeholders especially strong.

My interactions with these community members allowed me to become more informed about the community, and their opinions ultimately changed the course of my project. While personal communications with this segment of the Allensworth descendant community allowed me to learn about their opinions and preferences regarding the cemetery, archival research revealed important information about the cemetery’s boundaries and legal status.

Cemetery history provided by descendants through personal conversations

While members of the descendant community were generally not familiar with the early history of the Allensworth Cemetery, conversations with them were helpful for learning about the more recent history of it, and for learning and documenting their wishes and opinions for what might eventually happen to it.

During my conversation with Nettie Morrison (2017), when I stated that I had heard that the cemetery had been plowed, she replied, “That’s a fact. When I first came there that was happening.” Multiple members of the descendant community had mentioned a specific neighbor as being the one responsible for this. Morrison (2007) confirmed this person’s identity stating, “You’d see him on the plow, you’d know it was him! [laughs].” She stated,

I got tired of, ok you know there used to be little metal plates that they had, I got tired of picking them up and I would give them to someone at the park; I put dirt
back on skeletal remains, because they used to farm all around there and get too close and dig up the corpse. Oh yeah they used to plant cotton and stuff all over [Morrison 2017].

Conversations with community members also revealed that the neighboring parcel had recently been sold, and that the neighbor who had been responsible for the plowing of the cemetery has died within the past few years.

The Pierros, despite growing up in the area, didn’t spend time around up the cemetery until their mother was buried there. Sam Pierro (2017) stated, “We didn’t fool around out here too much until we buried my Mother. And before that it was about 1960 when anybody was buried here. A guy named Joe Jackson that we knew, he used to live on Road 84...”. Sam’s brother David stated, “While I lived at Allensworth [1953 to 1964] I didn’t personally know anyone who had been buried there during those years. So, I never bothered to go out for a visit; and there were no areas near the cemetery suitable for the cattle to graze in” (Pierro 2017). Once their mother was interred there, in 1991, naturally they did visit. Sam stated,

...my mother, before she died, she requested to be buried here in Allensworth. That was before she was actually sick. And she told my sisters that she wanted to be buried in Allensworth so they went and checked to see what it would take for her to be buried in Allensworth. She had a stroke, and I think in three days she was dead. So we got permission from the board of supervisors to bury her. Buried our mother. We had the funeral in Bakersfield, we brought her out here, we dug the grave
ourselves and the boys put her to rest. You know we did everything ourselves. It was something special for us [Sam Pierro 2017].

Several other members of the Pierro family had stated that they, too, would like to be buried at Allensworth, beside their mother (David Pierro 2017). Sam Pierro spoke of the difficulties of being able to maintain the cemetery:

And after she was buried here we kind of maintained it for a little while but weren’t consistent, you see, we weren’t consistent. And all the children are scattered so they’re not here to do it. I did it for a while, I’d take the tractor, I’d come out and dig just the weeds where I didn’t think there were any graves, try to keep the weeds off a little while, but after a while, I got busy, I’d moved into Bakersfield and stuff myself; I wasn’t here that much. Everything changed, you know. So we actually need a grave district, a committee and stuff formed to take care of it properly [Pierro 2017].

As stated before, Penny Singleton-Eldridge’s father, Henry Singleton, was involved in the development of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. She stated,

he expressed concern about the cemetery even then, he would have liked to have had at least recognition of the fact that they were there, and since it had been vandalized it became a concern of mine, and I had even said that I would sponsor or contribute funds to help them to revitalize that cemetery. I realized that some of the sites, grave sites, they’re all mangled and mixed up and really in bad shape…” She
stated that she had spoken with others about the cemetery: “I said, it’s too bad that we don’t have a committee, that can get someone with funding, to clean up the area, and then have one weatherproof, rainproof sign put up with all the names of the people that we know for sure that passed in Allensworth [Singleton-Eldridge 2016].

Ms. Singleton-Eldridge, granddaughter of Joshua Singleton, revealed that the disturbed and neglected status of the cemetery was a deterrent to her wishing to visit it. She stated, “I don’t really want to go and look at it. You know because it would be depressing, that my grandparents don’t really have a decent headstone of some type…” (Singleton-Eldridge 2016).

Mrs. Singleton-Eldridge may very well have spoken with Ms. Nettie Morrison, who has advocated for years for the cemetery to be protected and cared for. Ms. Morrison also described having conversations about how the Allensworth Cemetery might undergo restoration:

like I said I’ve officially retired from this. But we had talked about restoring, like putting the headstones up, markers or something, to identify where peoples’ remains had been identified. And then between there, putting like flowers, trees and where people might want to go and reminisce and that kind of thing. And then just have trees or something on the far end. I would like to see it, would like them to show signs of respect. I’d like to see it look decent [Morrison 2017].
Sam Pierro also spoke about making the cemetery a nicer place for visitors to spend time, but reiterated the difficulties inherent in such a task:

Once you take something like this over it's got to be maintained, you've got to take care. We did the fence and stuff, and then people stole the fence. So, you put something else out here, we've got to do that too... we talked about building like a little place where people can come and sit, worship or whatever they want to do... But like I said we never got that far along with that. So, what you see now is what we've got. And hopefully something will take place and we eventually do something with it; take care of it [Sam Pierro 2017].

Physical upkeep concerns were also high on Colonel Allensworth SHP Manager Steven Ptomey’s list of considerations regarding the idea of cemetery acquisition. I conducted a final interview over the phone with him towards the end of this project. While I considered the interpretive authority of the cemetery to belong to the members of the Allensworth descendant community, it was important that the views of Mr. Ptomey, as a stakeholder, be represented as well.

*Interview with stakeholder Steven Ptomey*

Park Interpreter III and Registered Professional Archaeologist Steven Ptomey began working at Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park in 2007. In addition to being the Manager there, he is also Manager of the Tejon Sector of the Tehachapi District. Mr. Ptomey stated multiple times that in his opinion the Allensworth Cemetery has little to offer in terms of interpretive value. He emphasized legal, logistical, management and resource-
related obstacles that he sees as standing in the way of the Park potentially taking ownership of the Allensworth Cemetery. He noted that the State Historic Park had had issues with vandalism, as well, and stated that Park ownership of the Allensworth Cemetery could very well mean needing to fence it off and prevent access for everyone, in order to ensure its protection.

He stated that visiting the cemetery required trespassing on private land and that, while this wasn’t an issue for private individuals wishing to visit the cemetery, an easement would be required if individuals from a State agency were to access it. He mentioned that fencing had been stolen from the Park as well, and brought up concerns about theft of any material that the Park might theoretically install, such as an interpretive sign.

Mr. Ptomey’s main concerns were in regards to the various difficulties that would be presented in managing the Allensworth Cemetery, coupled with a lack of personnel and funding. He stated that “It opens up all kinds of issues and like I said, what is the average person going to get out of visiting the cemetery versus visiting a house?” He stated that he was neutral in regards to the idea of the Allensworth Cemetery being nominated as a California Historical Landmark.

While he strongly stated the factors which he feels preclude Park ownership of the cemetery, he felt that different circumstances could potentially change this stance:

Again, it’s not necessarily that we don’t want the property per se, but it opens up so many issues there’s no way for us to do it right. And I’m a big believer of, ok, if we’re going to deal with this issue, you know, we need to make sure we deal with it correctly, of course within policy... Now if we had complete easement, complete
right of way there, we had the staffing, to obtain that piece of property then yeah, that’d be a different story [Ptomey 2017].

While the conversation between Steven Ptomey and myself centered on practical reasons why the Park had not undertaken management of the Allensworth Cemetery, issues of historical oppression did not come up. In contrast, speaking with members of the Allensworth descendant community revealed connections between the past and present, especially as related to social justice concerns.

*Connections between past and present*

It has become clear that the solution for how to make this project relevant to social justice goals centers around context, and on connections or parallels between the past and the present. By researching and describing the sociohistorical context within which Allensworth was formed, and talking to members of the descendant community about their own experiences, I was able to see and describe connections between struggles against race based inequalities in the distant past, the recent past, and the present. Descendant community members mentioned ways in which racism impacted their job opportunities. Environmental racism appears to have been an issue. Allensworth residents had to fight against the development of two mega dairies near their town (Harris 2007; Morrison 2017 personal communication). Farmers in the area participated in the Black Farmers Lawsuit in response to discriminatory lending practices of the Federal Government (Montgomery 2016 personal communication).
As described in the literature review, recent projects have emphasized the benefit of partnering with descendant communities in order to interpret the meaning of archaeological findings (Blakely 1997; Blakey 2010a; Franklin 2012). In terms of interpreting the history and the current condition of the Allensworth Cemetery, I felt that it was important that I amplify and accentuate the goals, opinions and themes expressed by my “ethical client” (Mack and Blakey 2004:14), the Allensworth descendant community. The descriptions of environmental racism and modern-day Black pioneership are present in this thesis at the suggestion of community members, and these topics also serve as important bridges between the past and present, showing the continuum and making the former relevant to the latter.

The way that history is viewed and presented is an important factor in how the past is viewed in relation to the present. While the focus of California Department of Parks and Recreation’s interpretation seems to be the subsistence and commercial activities of Allensworth residents and the roles they played in the community, The Friends of Allensworth, in their history of the town, describe its foundation and existence as being inextricably tied to African Americans’ efforts to mitigate the impacts of systemic racism upon their lives. The forces that moved the Allensworth Pioneers to found the town of Allensworth are the same forces that the modern-day descendant community has faced in their own lives, and continues to face. There was purposeful opposition to both the success of Allensworth as an African American settlement (in the form of the railroad, the discriminatory hiring practices in the surrounding areas, and struggles for water), and the establishment of the State Historic Park (in the form of political opposition).
Sam Pierro noted that the District Senator at the time opposed the establishment of the Park. Pierro said,

I was around a lot because my father was involved in trying to get the park going. And he got older... a lot of the meetings they would go to, they would go to a meeting every month... some were in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento, you know Fresno sometimes. A lot of it involved driving to the meetings, I’d have to sit up through the meetings. And they would have all day meetings like from ten to maybe four o’clock in the evening before they’d get over, and back and forth... And there was a lot of stuff that went on, not so much in the meetings, but politically there was a lot of pressure because of what Allensworth was, a Black community [Pierro 2017].

He indicated the connection between the political opposition to the establishment of the Park and his own family’s struggles in trying to farm in the area: “There’s a lot of, some open stuff, and some, you know, undermining stuff... you’re different because you’re not Black, you might not relate to some of the stuff I’ve been saying... You had people who didn’t want to see us even do what we were doing, trying to make it...”.

Sam Pierro was by no means the only person to discuss the adversity which led African American people to live at Allensworth. The Friends of Allensworth (2016) state,
Colonel Allensworth and his colleagues were convinced that the only way blacks would be able to live with some semblance of freedom and dignity was to build their own town. They hoped to create a place where blacks could own property and otherwise achieve their full economic potential, free from discriminatory laws and practices of the time [Friends of Allensworth 2016].

Like the original settlers, the Pierros came to Allensworth in search of greater opportunity and a chance to be self-sufficient. Sam (2017) described some of the difficulties they faced, both in terms of both the natural and social environment:

Growing up here was difficult, what you mentioned about how it was growing up... we had a lot of work for one thing, and with us having a large family it was necessary to do that in order for us to survive properly... because my Father had farm jobs and stuff like that, plus he was trying to raise cattle himself, you know, make it, and so between that and us working together... by that time we had to herd cattle, out in the open fields. The fields are not as open as they were then. So we had to do that to take care of the cattle then because we didn't have a well and stuff to grow any feed. And it was really difficult to get money, especially for an African American, my father had a hard time trying to get funding to do anything, they wouldn't loan him money for a lot of years. And so consequently his dream of doing something special, he wanted to have a small dairy and stuff like that, but he couldn't do it with the way things were... [Pierro 2017].
The Friends of Allensworth are clear regarding what they see as the primary goal of the founding of Allensworth. They state, “In short, the cultural meaning of Allensworth at the time of its founding focused squarely on the promotion of individual self-reliance and self-respect among Black citizens of California” (Friends of Allensworth 2016).

David Pierro (2017) described the businesses he noticed Blacks owning during his early childhood in Bakersfield, establishments such as Mom and Pop stores, bars and a mortuary, and he spoke about the jobs that Blacks were able to have:

you wouldn’t see them in anyplace except in the fields, they were either a minister or something... when we lived in town I think we had a Black postman, he rode a bicycle, but there were no Black clerks, no Black teachers... of course there were no Black teachers when I got to Delano... I didn’t have a Black teacher until I got to Fresno State, except at Allensworth... and no Asians either, no Asians, no Hispanic teachers, yeah so anyway that was the general situation. The Civil Rights Movement, which when I started college in the Fall of 1959 at Bakersfield College there was a Black office worker there, but other than that, I can’t think of any other Blacks who were in any capacity there on the campus. And at my high school, no Blacks -I think there was a few Hispanics in the maintenance department- and like I say, no Asians, no one else except whites that were teachers [Pierro 2017].

Within this context, David Pierro was surprised and elated when he stopped in to check if the railroad was hiring and was offered a job as a fireman—basically an apprentice
engineer. He stated, “...that was beyond my wildest dreams to get on, in the operating department of the railroad. I never even considered that because that was beyond what Blacks had, I mean, I wasn’t thinking that consciously but subconsciously, Blacks just didn’t have those kinds of jobs” (Pierro 2017).

David Pierro was promoted to Engineer in 1971. Through his job, he witnessed the process of integration of the railroad:

And so then when I got promoted, there was another Black guy out of Richmond, he was right behind me in seniority but I was the senior, I was the senior Black... So I saw there was no Hispanics, no Asians, there were no minorities period there. So I was the first of the minorities between Richmond and Bakersfield [Pierro 2017].

He described a conversation he had a few years later with a personnel manager from the Santa Fe headquarters: “…he told me that they're wanting me to go into management. And he was telling me about things and he said, “well you’re the first Black engineer on the Santa Fe” (Pierro 2017).

Given the history of the history between the Santa Fe Railroad and the town of Allensworth, it was very meaningful for David to have this position. He described seeing his Father while driving past Allensworth shortly after being hired:

Approaching our farm at Allensworth, I began looking to see if I could see my Dad out in one of his fields. So I was looking, I was looking, and I saw him out there and I
said, “hey that’s my Dad!” The engineer and head brakeman said, “that’s your Dad, that’s your farm?! Get out on the gangplank and wave at him!” So I ran out on the walkway there, alongside the engine there and the engineer started tooting the whistle and getting my Dad’s attention. My Dad’s looking and I’m waving like mad and he was probably 200-300 feet from the tracks so he could see who I was, well he started smiling, ha, I’m waving like mad… so that was fantastic, that was the first trip. So yeah, I’ll never forget that [Pierro 2017].

Allensworth pioneer descendant Penny Singleton-Eldridge emphasized modern-day Allensworth’s importance as a way of encouraging.

Recognition that there was this Black, all Black, my father called it a colony. All Black town. And they were self-sufficient. You know in other words, they had their own school, library, they had their cattle, they had their food products. You know, they had everything they needed... barber shop, someone that could sew, someone that could deliver children. They had it all. My father told me that it was self-sufficient, they really didn’t need to go out and bring in items to survive [Singleton-Eldridge 2016].

Sam Pierro also spoke about Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park’s ongoing positive influence to further recognition of Black accomplishments. He stated, “it does something, I feel, for the ego of a lot of Blacks, not just the ego but pride or whatever you want to call it. Because a lot of us were raised up with negative thoughts about what Blacks have done, as a people” (Pierro 2017). He referenced the high incarceration rate of Blacks and described
a conversation with an inmate at North Kern State Prison who was out doing work at the Park. Sam said, “...just him coming to the park and working here, it impacted him to such a degree he told me that if he knew the park was here, this was here, he wouldn't have been in prison” (Pierro 2017).

In addition to standing as a monument to African American achievement, another theme, which connects the values of many of the members of the Allensworth descendant community to those of the historical colony members is the high value placed upon education. In an interview posted on YouTube, Friends of Allensworth member Jacqueline Chauhan stated,

these people were not all farmers, but I think when they first had to come up and had to kind of say that but their initial was about education. And sometimes we miss that... these were not poor people, these were educated people that got together to make this town [Chauhan 2012].

David, Sam, and Ralph's parents were educated as far as the 11th grade, while David, Ralph, and four of their siblings got college degrees. Ralph Pierro described how he strongly emphasized the value of education to his own children. David Pierro (2017) also described the significance of learning about history and sociology as a way to better understand one's self and others.
One of the things that stuck with me though was, they said what happens to you in a concentration camp, in an oppressive situation in general, is that you start doubting your group’s abilities and despising, if not hating, your group... And you admire your tormenter, the guy who's got you down by the throat, and every other kind of way you can imagine, you start admiring him. He’s in a position of power and strength; you admire him and hate yourself... So then I began to understand better what's happened to Black people, without us realizing it; most people don't realize what's happened [Pierro 2017].

Sam Pierro emphasized the educational potential of the Park, and emphasized the positive impacts of education, self-reliance, and education within his own family:

All sixteen of us graduated from high school, and a lot of us went to college; I went to a couple years of college, I wasn’t a great college guy but hey I’d get an A and stuff. Yeah most of us you know went to school, and it seemed they all did pretty well considering, you know what they got out in life [Pierro 2017].

Clearly, many members of the modern-day Allensworth descendant community highly value education, just as the original pioneers did. Refurbishing the Allensworth Cemetery and installing interpretive materials would be consistent with the educational priorities of the Allensworth descendant community and would add to the learning experience of visitors. In addition to the unifying theme of education as a thread connecting
the past and present, issues such as water and environmental quality also show continuity between past and present residents of Allensworth.

Environmental Issues

Environmental issues constitute another link between the past and the present at Allensworth. It is striking that access to water, the lack of which was a major obstacle to success for the colony of Allensworth, is an ongoing issue for the community. The arsenic which was discovered in the water supply in the 1960s is still present, while Allensworth residents continue to work to improve the water situation. They recently put forth a novel solution, for the Allensworth Community Service District to join with a nearby irrigation water district in order to supply Allensworth residents with drinking water. They have received grants to help with this process. Kayode Kadara (mentioned above, p. 99) is a member of the Deer Creek Storm Water Board, the Tri-County Water Authority Board, and the Tulare County Water Commission. Denise Kadara is a member of the Tulare Lake Basin Disadvantaged Community Water Study Stakeholders Oversight Advisory Committee, and she serves on the board of the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners. A Huffington Post article quoted attorney Tony Rossman, who stated, “A lot of dispersed communities face similar challenges, and what is learned here could be pretty influential in the rural West” (Yeung 2012). This move to reorganize the water districts speaks both to the efforts required by the lack of water, as well as the innovation utilized by those who live in the challenging environment of the area.

As mentioned earlier, the Allensworth community is no stranger to the threat of negative incursions on its land. Nettie Morrison (2017) described how the proposition for
the dairies in 2006 left her with little choice. She stated, “... a person like myself, I wouldn’t know anyone to buy my property, I couldn’t afford to give it away, I couldn’t walk away, so I had to fight. So we went all the way to Sacramento. And that’s where the fight ended up. And we came out victorious and I’m still grateful.”

Cattle-related environmental issues were a problem in the past as well. Jim Phillips (2000), a member of the white family who lived in the area and owned land adjacent to the cemetery, stated that in 1922 there was a major drought, and cowboys employed by the massive ranching corporation Miller and Lux drove a huge herd of cattle into the Allensworth area. Since there was not enough food for all of them, they killed about six thousand. Many of their remains were evidently left to rot, since Mr. Phillips stated that Allensworth community members worked at hauling their bones to the train for a period of two years (Phillips 2000). While it is unknown what efforts the Allensworth community may have made to prevent this pollution near their town, the community’s response to the proposed dairies in recent times demonstrates its power to organize and resolve to prevent detrimental development. Ms. Morrison (2017) said, “Allensworth has a beautiful history behind it. Everybody out here is... this is a poverty area, period. But in spite of all, we are somebody. And we don’t expect anybody to come out here and step on us, and that’s the bottom line.”

Despite extensive public comments against the dairies by local community members as well as African Americans who traveled for hours by bus to attend the hearing, the Board of Supervisors, all of whose members were white, voted to approve the dairy. Similar to the situation with the African Burial Ground in New York, the Allensworth descendant community was highly aware of connections between the dominant society’s lack of
concern for their heritage resources, and for themselves as a people. After the Tulare County Board of Supervisors’ approval of the dairies despite overwhelming protest, a community member stated off-camera, “When they took us from the shores of Africa they didn't want us to have anything then, nothing has changed!” (Harris 2007).

In 2007, a lawsuit was filed by the California Attorney General, the National Resources Defense Council, and the Center on Race Poverty and the Environment to block the dairies (Harris 2007), and the State of California agreed to pay the landowner 3.5 million dollars to refrain from raising livestock there (California State Parks 2007).

The fact that these issues and concerns were experienced in the past as well as in the present indicated that emphasizing them was a way to enhance the relevance and social significance of this project. I became aware of the themes of education and environmental issues through speaking with members of the Allensworth descendant community, both during formal interviews and during various events.

Events at Which I Communicated with Allensworth Descendant Community Members

An event that played a key role in enhancing the collaborative nature of this project was the cemetery cleanup day (April 2017), organized by Carnell Montgomery. Several people including members of the Pierro family, Tulare County Library, and myself assembled at the cemetery (Figure 26). Members of the descendant community were also present during survey and photographing of the site (Figure 27). The workday on April 2017 was a significant event in that it allowed me the opportunity to work alongside members of the descendant community as we cleaned soil and vegetation from the graves,
while speaking about the cemetery and getting to know each other a bit better on a personal level.

Figure 26. Cemetery dignification workday. From left to right: Christopher Anderson, Jonathan Waltmire, Carnell Montgomery Jr., Erica Thompson, Travis Pfohl, Astaria Pierro, Sam Pierro, Ralph Pierro. Photograph by Christopher Anderson.

The meeting at the community center was another chance for myself and descendant community members to share information and ideas and brainstorm ways to help protect the cemetery.
At the meeting at the Allensworth Community Center afterwards, Carnell had the participants stand up and briefly introduce themselves. He especially requested that I state what it was I wanted to do. As he had requested, Jonathan Waltmire of the Tulare County Library gave a short talk on Edmond Edward Wysinger, whose lawsuit helped integrate California schools. A strong and intentional theme of the meeting was Black pionership in the face of adversity. At Carnell’s urging I spoke about my ideas that I had spoken of with him earlier: GPR, GPS mapping, and the archaeological site forms that I planned to fill out.
and submit to the California Historic Resources Information System. Everyone seemed to be in agreement that GPR and documentation was a good way to go at this stage.

The overwhelming sentiment of members of the Allensworth descendant community that I spoke with was a desire for the cemetery to be placed under the protection or responsibility of some official or governmental body, something which would help ensure that it is better protected and preserved, and its boundaries respected.

During the workday and meeting on April 8th, 2017, members of the Pierro family related concerns about the boundary of the parcel, which was being contested. Someone had relatively recently stolen the metal chain-link fencing they had put up along the western boundary, while the neighboring parcel to the east had recently been sold and the new owners were putting in a fence, with post holes present during the workday. A few possible boundary posts had been put in by various people. Realizing this concern and urgency, I made sure to take GPS points on these posts. In the couple days following, I georeferenced a screen shot from the County Assessor’s website showing the property boundary highlighted. I made maps showing the various contested boundary markers. Based on this, it appeared that the western fence was on the property line, but that what the Pierros had originally thought was the boundary on the east was actually over the cemetery boundary line. I was able to send a member of the Pierro family this map the Monday after. They were glad to learn that they had been mistaken and that the fence was in fact being installed in the appropriate spot.

I was also at Allensworth for the Old Time Jubilee on May 20, 2017. I was able to meet with David Pierro at the cemetery, where I asked him how far I should stay away from
his family plot, out of respect. He said that it was all right to bring the GPR near the graves and that it was not as though anyone would be there to see.

While it was intended that interested members of the Allensworth descendant community be present during the GPR survey, there were some issues that kept this from happening. Part of this was the relatively small size of the descendant community group that I was working with, which was largely self-selecting based on level of interest in or connection to the cemetery, as well as their place of residence and physical abilities. A total of two people were present on the appointed day of the GPR fieldwork, which turned out to be just as well since it turned out that the fieldwork needed to be rescheduled due to a broken piece of equipment. On a visit that same day to Nettie Morrison, who I had previously interviewed, she encouraged me to do the survey soon, while a member of the Friends of Allensworth suggested that perhaps more people would come if the GPR was scheduled on a day other than a Friends of Allensworth event. I set the new date for June 9th, the day before the Juneteenth celebration. Unfortunately, the able-bodied descendant community member who was present and willing to help on the original day was not able to make it on the rescheduled day, and no Allensworth community members were present during the GPR survey. I was, however, able to speak with several members of the descendant community the next day, and update them on progress. Despite the low turnout, I would argue that the descendant community’s guidance of the research directions, and their interpretation of the social contexts surrounding the Allensworth cemetery, were more important than participation in the technical aspects of the project. The descendant community members, through my interactions with them, ascribed meaning to the project.
The Juneteenth Celebration on June 10, 2017 was another opportunity to touch base with Carnell and Sam Pierro about the status of my project. I stated that I had done the GPR survey, and Carnell wanted to check that I had the information I needed to move on with the paperwork/forms phase of my involvement as we had discussed at the meeting as the community center. I discussed my findings on the National and State Registers with him, and he requested that I communicate my findings to the Friends of Allensworth Board of Directors. While scheduling and logistics kept me from presenting at a meeting in person, at Carnell’s request I prepared an informational statement on the process and effects of inclusion in the National and State Registers for presentation to the Board members.

While there is currently no threat of development close to the cemetery, fence theft, agricultural activities and uncertainties regarding the legal status have indicated a need for formal recordation and recognition of the cemetery. The final research question, ‘What is the eligibility and process for adding the Allensworth Cemetery to the National or State Registers?’ was developed in collaboration with the Allensworth descendant community and is intended to help remedy this need. The answers to this question will be presented in the next chapter.
5. Recommendations on National and State Register Eligibility

National and State Register Evaluation Criteria and Effects

The registration programs for historical places (the National Register of Historic Places, the list of California Historical Landmarks, the list of California Points of Historical Interest, and the California Register of Historical Resources) are intended to document various historic properties and historical resources for planning purposes. It is important to note, however, that inclusion in these registers does not result in any change of ownership of the resource, but instead functions as a tool for identification and planning.

This section will first describe the nomination criteria and review processes for the NRHP and the three State registers (Figure 28). Then, I will discuss the eligibility of the Allensworth Cemetery for these registers. This will aid and inform any future efforts for nominating the Allensworth Cemetery to one or more of the Registers described below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>California Historical Landmarks</th>
<th>California Points of Historical Interest</th>
<th>California Register of Historical Resources</th>
<th>National Register of Historic Places</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The first, last, only or most significant of its type in the state or within a large geographic region (Northern, Central or Southern California).</td>
<td>Same as those for Landmarks, but directed to local (city or county) regions.</td>
<td>• Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.</td>
<td>• Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Associated with an individual or group having a profound influence on the history of California.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.</td>
<td>• Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A prototype of, or an outstanding example of, a period, style, architectural movement or construction or one of the more notable works of the best surviving work in a region of a pioneer architect, designer or master builder.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.</td>
<td>• Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relation to other programs</td>
<td>Resources listed as California Historical Landmarks are automatically listed in California Register.</td>
<td>Resources listed as Points of Historical Interest are concurrently listed in California Register.</td>
<td>Resources listed in National Register or as California Historical Landmarks or Points of Historical Interest are also listed in California Register.</td>
<td>Resources listed in National Register are automatically listed in California Register.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Consent</td>
<td>Written consent of property owner(s) is required.</td>
<td>Written consent of property owner(s) is required.</td>
<td>Consent of property owner(s) not required, but cannot be listed if owner(s) objects.</td>
<td>Consent of property owner(s) not required, but cannot be listed if owner(s) objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government Notification</td>
<td>Local government must be given 60 days to comment on application before public hearing is held.</td>
<td>Local government must be given 60 days to comment on application before public hearing is held.</td>
<td>Clerk of local government must be given 60 days to comment on application before it is sent to NPS.</td>
<td>Local government must be given 60 days to comment on application before public hearing is held.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of Designation</td>
<td>• Local building inspector must grant code alternatives provided under State Historic Building Code.</td>
<td>• Local building inspector must grant code alternatives provided under State Historic Building Code.</td>
<td>• Local building inspector must grant code alternatives provided under State Historic Building Code.</td>
<td>• Tax incentives, in some cases, for rehabilitation of depreciable structures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Local assessor may enter into contract with property owner for property tax reduction (Mills Act).</td>
<td>• Local assessor may enter into contract with property owner for property tax reduction (Mills Act).</td>
<td>• Local assessor may enter into contract with property owner for property tax reduction (Mills Act).</td>
<td>• Tax deduction available for donation of preservation easement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Limited protection (environmental review may be required under CEQA if property is threatened by a project).</strong></td>
<td><strong>Limited protection (environmental review may be required under CEQA if property is threatened by a project).</strong></td>
<td><strong>Limited protection (environmental review may be required under CEQA if property is threatened by a project).</strong></td>
<td>• Local assessor may enter into contract with property owner for property tax reduction (Mills Act).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Owner may place own plaque or marker.</td>
<td>• Owner may place own plaque or marker.</td>
<td>• Owner may place own plaque or marker.</td>
<td>• Preservation consideration in federally funded or licensed undertakings (Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Exxon plan for flood hazard area and highway directional marker (not text).</td>
<td></td>
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<td>• Limited protection (environmental review may be required under CEQA if property is threatened by a project).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 28. California Department of Parks and Recreation registration program comparison chart.**

**National Register of Historic Places**

In order for a historic property or district to be listed in the NRHP it must meet at least one of four criteria:

A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

B. That are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or
C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D. That have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory [National Park Service 1990].

In a NRHP nomination, the historic context of the property must be used to demonstrate its significance. “Historic context means information about the period, the place, and the events that created, influenced, or formed the backdrop to the historic resources. The discussion of historic context should describe the history of the community where the property is located as it relates to the history of the property” (Research and the National Register Form NPS 1991).

The other necessary evaluations are Association, Period of Significance, and Integrity.

**Association** refers to the direct connection between the property and the area of significance for which it is nominated. For a property to be significant under historic events (Criterion A), the physical structure must have been there to "witness" the event or series of events; they must have actually occurred on the nominated property. For a property to be significant for an association with an individual (Criterion B), the individual should have lived, worked, or been on the premises during the period in which the person accomplished the activities for which the
individual is considered significant. **Period of significance** refers to the span of time during which significant events and activities occurred. Events and associations with historic properties are finite; most properties have a clearly definable period of significance [National Park Service 1991].

The final, but required, consideration is **Integrity**, “the authenticity of physical characteristics from which properties obtain their significance” (Research and the National Register Form NPS 1991). National Register Bulletin 41 states,

To qualify for National Register listing, properties must retain historic integrity. The Criteria for Evaluation recognize seven factors which define historic integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. All must be considered in determining whether a burial place retains enough of its characteristic features to represent the associations, function, and appearance it had during its period of significance. The natural and developed landscape features that are associated with complex burial places such as cemeteries must be considered as part of the evaluation of integrity [National Park Service 1992].

The Bulletin continues:

In essence, the researcher should ask the following questions in evaluating integrity:

1) To what degree does the burial place and its overall setting convey the most important period(s) of use? 2) To what degree have the original design and
materials of construction, decoration, and landscaping been retained? 3) Has the property's potential to yield significant information in American culture been compromised by ground-disturbance or previous investigation? [National Park Service 1992].

In California, the State Historic Preservation Office oversees the process of nomination to the NRHP. Once it deems an application to be sufficient, the nomination is formally reviewed by the State Historic Resources Commission. The Office of Historic Preservation will notify the applicants, the owners of the properties, and the appropriate governmental jurisdictions of the place and time of this public hearing. If the Historic Resources Commission concludes that the nomination meets NRHP Criteria, they recommend that the nomination be forwarded to the Keeper of the NRHP in Washington, D.C.

If the owner of the property objects to the property being listed, it will not be listed. The same is true of a historic district where more than 51% of a district's property owners object to the listing. However, if the State Historic Resources Commission, the SHPO and the Keeper all agree that the property or district is eligible, it will get a Determination of Eligibility, which results in the same protections as if it were listed.

During Federal projects or projects with Federal involvement, the National Historic Preservation Act (1966) requires that possible effects of the project on historic properties be taken into account. In addition to the NRHP, there are three different State registration programs for historical resources.
State Registration Programs

The State level registries are the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), the list of California Historical Landmarks, and the list of California Points of Historical Interest. Designation has many benefits, which are listed below in the description of each register. During State or Federal projects, the effects upon historical resources must be considered during the process of reviewing the potential impacts of proposed projects.

A historic property or historical resource can be listed on multiple registers. If a resource or property is listed in the register of California Historical Landmarks, the register of California Points of Historical Interest, or the NRHP, it is automatically listed in the California Register of Historical Resources. A resource cannot be designated as both a Historical Landmark and a Point of Historical Interest. It can be on the NRHP and also be a Historical Landmark (or Point of Historical Interest).

Currently, Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park is both a National Historic District and a California Historical Landmark. The boundaries of these entries exclude portions of the historic town site, as well as the cemetery, but include the portion of the downtown with the restored and reconstructed buildings.

As with the NRHP, eligibility for the designations of Historical Landmark and Point of Historical Interest, and inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources, are determined based on whether a historic property meets at least one item within a list of three criteria and has enough integrity to convey significance. The criteria vary slightly between the three registries, but are very similar. For all these registries, the State of California does not provide the funds for signage.
California Historical Landmarks

The criteria for California Historical Landmarks status are:

• The property is the first, last, only, or most significant historical property of its type in the region. The regions are Southern California, Central California, and Northern California. If a property has lost its historic appearance (integrity) it may be listed as a site.

• The property is associated with an individual or group having a profound influence on the history of California. The primary emphasis should be the place or places of achievement of an individual. Birthplace, death place, or place of interment shall not be a consideration unless something of historical importance is connected with his or her birth or death. If a property has lost its historic appearance (integrity) it may be listed as a site.

• The property is a prototype of, or an outstanding example of, a period, style, architectural movement, or construction, or it is one of the more notable works, or the best surviving work in a region of a pioneer architect, designer, or master builder. An architectural landmark must have excellent physical integrity, including integrity of location. An architectural landmark generally will be considered on its original site, particularly if its significance is basically derived from its design relationship to its site [California Office of Historic Preservation 2011:2].

The process for nominating a property to the California Register of Historical Landmarks is as follows: The applicant completes the forms, application and cover sheet,
and gets written consent from the property owners. If a plaque is being requested, the owners must include written permission in the cover letter to place the plaque on their property. These materials are submitted to the Office of Historic Preservation, who reviews the nominations to ensure that all the necessary components are there and filled out properly. If not, they are returned to the applicant for corrections. Then they notify the property owner, applicants, and appropriate governmental jurisdictions of where and when the State Historic Resources Commission meeting will take place. If the Commission approves the nomination, it is forwarded to the Director of California Department of Parks and Recreation for final approval (State of California 2017).

The Office of Historic Preservation describes the effects of designation as follows:

- Limited protection: Environmental review may be required under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) if property is threatened by a project. Contact your local planning agency for more information.
- Local assessor may enter into contract with property owner for property tax reduction (Mills Act).
- Local building inspector must grant code alternative provided under State Historic Building Code. Registration will be recorded on the property deed.
- Automatic listing in California Register of Historical Resources.
- Bronze plaque at site (underwritten by local sponsor) ordered through OHP; highway directional sign available through local Department of Transportation (Caltrans) district office [State of California 2017].
California Point of Historical Interest

Another option is nomination as a California Point of Historical Interest. This designation on the local (city or county) level. To be eligible a property must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- The first, last, only, or most significant of its type within the local geographic region (City or County).
- Associated with an individual or group having a profound influence on the history of the local area.
- A prototype of, or an outstanding example of, a period, style, architectural movement or construction or is one of the more notable works or the best surviving work in the local region of a pioneer architect, designer or master builder [State of California 2017].

The California Point of Historical Interest nomination process is exactly the same as that for a California Historical Landmark. The effects of designation as a Point of Historical Interest are as follows:

- Limited protection: Environmental review may be required under CEQA if property is threatened by a project. Contact your local planning agency for more information.
- Local assessor may enter into contract with property owner for property tax reduction (Mills Act).
- Local building inspector must grant code alternative provided under State Historic Building Code.
- Registration is recorded on property deed.

- A small enamel directional sign (no text) available through local Caltrans district office. Owner may place his or her own marker at the site [State of California 2017].

_California Register of Historical Resources_

The final registration program option is the California Register of Historical Resources. The California Office of Historic Preservation (2017) states,

The State Historical Resources Commission has designed this program for use by state and local agencies, private groups and citizens to identify, register and protect California’s historical resources. The Register is the authoritative guide to the state’s significant historical and archaeological resources [State of California 2017].

The designation criteria are as follows:

- Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States (Criterion 1).

- Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history (Criterion 2).

- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values (Criterion 3).
• Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation (Criterion 4) [State of California 2017].

As noted above, resources listed as a California Historical Landmark or a California Point of Historical Interest are automatically placed on the California Register of Historical Resources. The effects of designation are the same as those for California Historical Landmarks and California Points of Historical Interest, except that there is no option to purchase an official marker.

Within this understanding of the various registers, the specific circumstances of the Allensworth Cemetery can be taken into consideration in order to determine the best course of action to gain recognition of the significant historical status of the Allensworth Cemetery on the State or Federal levels.

Considerations

Based on review of similar case studies, review of National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) evaluation criteria, which included a review of Special Criteria Considerations, and in consultation with Architectural Historian Stacey De Shazo, M.A., the Allensworth Cemetery appears to be eligible for inclusion in the NRHP as a discontiguous contributing element of the Allensworth Historic District (NR#72000263). The Allensworth Cemetery is unlikely to be considered individually eligible for inclusion in the NRHP on its own. The Allensworth Cemetery does, however, appear to be eligible to achieve recognition status independently.
of the Allensworth Historic District as a California Historical Landmark or a California Point
of Historical Interest, as well as by being added to the California Register of Historical
Resources. I recommend nomination of this resource as a California Historical Landmark
and not a Point of Historical Interest because the Allensworth Cemetery is significant on a
regional level, rather than just a city or county level. Addition to this list would
automatically also place the cemetery on the California Register of Historical Resources.

As stated above, the Allensworth Cemetery appears to be eligible for addition to the
Allensworth Historic District. However, the lengthy and involved process of preparing a
new, ‘Amended’ nomination is a deterrent to recommending the resource for listing on the
NRHP. Possible NRHP significance criteria the Allensworth Cemetery could be considered
under would be A (history), B (association with a significant person(s)), and D (data
potential). In terms of support for Criterion A, the Allensworth Cemetery is associated with
the founding of Allensworth, which reflects the pattern of Post-Reconstruction Black
migration to the West. The Allensworth Cemetery was established shortly after the town of
Allensworth was founded, and its establishment both reflects and is a result of
Allensworth’s establishment as a self-governed, self-sufficient Black colony. In terms of
support for Criteria B, the cemetery is associated with significant person(s) that helped
found the town of Allensworth. The list of those who settled in Allensworth includes
teachers, farmers, musicians, Civil War veterans, civil rights activists and community and
church leaders. The Allensworth Cemetery contains approximately 43 graves and was
developed as the main burial place serving the citizens of the town. It appears to be the
only all-Black cemetery in California. The earliest known burial is that of Sergeant Frank A.
Smith, a former Buffalo Soldier who was stationed at Fort Sill in Oklahoma Territory and
who died on November 8, 1911 at the age of 58. Smith and his wife moved to Allensworth in 1910 and they were some of the first people to move to Allensworth (Beasley 1919:156). The list of those buried in the Allensworth Cemetery also includes J. A. Hackett, who was a successful merchant, founder of Cooper A.M.E. Zion Church in Oakland, and treasurer of the N.A.A.C.P. of Northern California (Rivers ca. 2000; San Francisco Call 1896). In terms of support for Criterion D, the cemetery has valuable data potential. Preliminary GPR survey of the Allensworth Cemetery has indicated that this method has the potential to reveal the exact locations of burials. In future efforts, better data could be gained by using an antenna with a higher frequency than the 250MHz one that was used. If further GPR testing were to be conducted by an expert, the location and number of graves could be more completely determined to have a greater understanding of the original extent and size of the cemetery and number of burials. Data could also be obtained through further GPR study as well as through the use of other non-invasive testing techniques such as proton magnetometry or the use of forensic canines trained to detect historic burials. If excavation and testing were to take place, osteological and paleopathological data could assist with personal identifications, as well as shed light on health, disease, and diet across the life course of those buried there.

Cemeteries make up very few of the NRHP properties in California, and most California cemeteries on the NRHP include elaborate funerary architecture and/or buildings such as chapels or other structures associated with the well-to-do. Although many of the original grave markers are no longer present, the Allensworth Cemetery does contain some historic-period stone and concrete grave markers, and many of the grave sites have been marked in more recent times with small wooden crosses. The Allensworth
Cemetery appears to have integrity of design and worship. Physical documentation regarding many of the original grave markers that were used there is not available, but oral history has indicated that many of the early markers consisted of metal plates and wooden stakes (Morrison 2017; Singleton and Smith 1976). Since the graves of the cemetery likely originally consisted of small, ephemeral markers, the Allensworth Cemetery appears to have integrity of workmanship. Furthermore, early aerial photographs indicate that in terms of organization, the Allensworth Cemetery was designed to consist of two rows of graves, located in the northeast portion of the cemetery parcel, and running north-south. This original layout is still visibly intact, thus the Allensworth Cemetery retains integrity of design.

The Allensworth Cemetery appears to be eligible for the NRHP as a discontiguous contributing element of the Allensworth Historic District. The National Register Bulletin on Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties (National Park Service:1995) provides a brief list of circumstances under which a historic district may contain discontiguous elements. The applicable one in this case is: “When visual continuity is not a factor of historic significance, when resources are geographically separate, and when the intervening space lacks significance: for example, a cemetery located outside a rural village may be part of a discontiguous district” (National Park Service 1995:12). This is precisely the case with the Allensworth Cemetery.

As a discontiguous contributing element to the current Allensworth Historic District, the Allensworth Cemetery could potentially be nominated under three Criteria: A, B, and D. In a NRHP nomination, the Areas of Significance would be: Agriculture, Archaeology-historic Non-Original, Commerce, Education, Ethnic Heritage- Black, Industry, Literature,

Significant dates are August 3, 1908 on which day the colony was founded and 1974, when the establishment of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park was authorized. This date range would form the period of significance. In terms of California Historical Landmark and Point of Historical Interest, the Allensworth Cemetery is eligible under the first and possibly the second criteria.

As with the other registries, NRHP nomination requires the contact information of the property owner so that the Office of Historic Preservation can notify them of the date and time of the State Historic Resources Commission hearing. Permission from the owner is not required for the property to be nominated, but if the property is determined to be eligible, the land-owner’s permission is required for the property to be listed. Without this permission, however, the property would get a determination of eligibility, which would give it the same protections as a listing. The main drawback of NRHP nomination to include the Allensworth Cemetery as a discontiguous element is the requirement to complete an amended NRHP nomination, which is a detailed process and, although not a requirement, likely needs the assistance of a qualified professional to complete the amended nomination, which is a deterrent to updating or adding under-valued and under-represented resources to the NRHP. The existing NRHP documentation for the Allensworth Historic District dates to 1972 and as such it is far briefer than the current requirements for NRHP nominations. As a result, submitting an amended NRHP nomination to add the Allensworth Cemetery as a discontiguous contributing element to the Allensworth Historic District would require
significant research and updates to the previous District nomination form (Amy Crain 2017 personal communication).

Although not ideal, nominating the Allensworth Cemetery for inclusion in the register of California Historical Landmarks or as a California Point of Historical Interest is much more feasible than amending a NRHP listing. As described earlier the two registration types have the same criteria except that properties on the register of California Historical Landmarks have significance on a wider regional level than is the case for California Points of Historical Interest. Nomination to the register of California Historical Landmarks appears to be more appropriate because of the wide regional significance of the Allensworth Cemetery. As stated earlier, this designation would automatically also place the Allensworth Cemetery on the California Register of Historical Resources, an action which would require that potential impacts to it be taken into account during State or Federal projects.

The benefit of pursuing inclusion in the list of California Historical Landmarks and the list of California Register of Historical Resources is that these designations would be easier to achieve than an amended NRHP nomination because 1) by dealing with only the cemetery there are no potential conflicts between public and private landownership, and 2) the level of documentation and detail necessary for nomination is far less onerous. As stated, the nomination requirements consist of the California Department of Parks and Recreation archaeological forms, a one-page application sheet and a cover letter. The Allensworth Cemetery is eligible under the first requirement due to the fact that it is some combination of “the first, last, only, or most significant” (California Office of Historic Preservation 2011:2) African American cemetery in Central California.
Before the Allensworth Cemetery can be nominated for any of the Registers, the issue of ownership must be resolved. The pros and cons of State, private, and non-profit ownership should be weighed if these are indeed options. Issues such as access and management also should be considered. In terms of cemetery ownership, if ownership by nonprofits is desired, some form of partnership may be effective amongst the Friends of Allensworth, the Allensworth Progressive Association, and the Allensworth Community Services District, where one of these organizations is the legal owner of the cemetery parcel while the other two provide assistance in the form of funding or management. Ms. Penny Singleton-Eldridge is the direct descendant of Joshua Singleton, who is one of the legal owners of the cemetery. When I spoke with her she expressed interest in helping with efforts to preserve or restore the cemetery. Once the issue of property ownership can be resolved, nominations to the NRHP, the California Historical Landmarks and California Register of Historical Resources appear to be expedient ways of gaining official recognition of the historical importance of the Allensworth Cemetery, and protection in the event of Federal or State projects.

Pursuing the California Historical Landmark designation appears to be the most simple and expedient method of obtaining recognition and some protection for the Allensworth Cemetery. This designation would also put it on the California Register of Historic Resources. Under the requirements for this designation, the Allensworth Cemetery could be recognized for its own sake.

In terms of cemetery stewardship, it is also worth noting that there is ample precedent within California Department of Parks and Recreation for maintaining cemeteries. They state,
Burial sites and cemeteries reflect the cultural values and practices of the past. They help us understand who we are as a society, and where we have come from. Although cleaning up and beautifying old cemeteries is a long-standing tradition, widespread vandalism, theft, and abandonment have increased interest in preservation of old cemeteries. Preservation entails research, documentation, evaluation and treatment, ongoing maintenance, and possibly nomination to the National Register of Historic Places [State of California 2017].

There are 14 cemeteries and burial places located within California State Parks, exclusive of the State Historic Parks (State of California 2017). In regards to State ownership, the California Department of Parks and Recreation lists several criteria and the weight which they are accorded in the decision-making process for acquiring new land. The Allensworth Cemetery appears to be highly qualified, especially if it is added to the Allensworth Historic District. The California Department of Parks and Recreation Acquisition Program webpage lists several project ranking criteria for Cultural Landscapes and Corridors and for Significant Cultural Resource Properties, and many of these criteria relate favorably to Allensworth. For example, the criteria list for Cultural Landscapes and Corridors states that “highest priority will be given to cultural landscapes in which significant cultural themes and properties are under-represented in the State Park System (e.g., 20th century).”

I spoke with Kelley Di Pinto, the California Department of Parks and Recreation Chief of Acquisitions & Real Properties, on October 17, 2017. This enabled me to get a
better idea of the process through which California Department of Parks and Recreation acquires property. The decision to acquire property is not made at the individual Park level, but is made during a series of committee meetings and reviews. When a District expresses interest in acquiring a property, they prepare a form and the request goes before a series of committees such as the Department Acquisition Review Team, which are made up of upper-level managers such as the Natural and Cultural Chiefs of Divisions. The committees make recommendations to the Director. Next, the proposal is submitted to the Department of General Services, who reviews the findings. They work with the Department of Finance, and then submit the proposed acquisition to the State Public Works Board, which purchases the property on behalf of State Parks.

Regardless of which individual, group or agency ends up with ownership of the cemetery parcel, California Department of Parks and Recreation, citizens of the town of Allensworth, and the Friends of Allensworth could collaborate to produce interpretive material about the Allensworth Cemetery, and work to present it as a unique historical site and an asset to the public.
6. Discussion

The results described above revealed the answers to my research questions, allowing better understandings of the Allensworth Cemetery as a historical resource, its boundaries, and its legal status. These results also indicated how a project such as this could be carried out in a collaborative manner in a way that furthers social justice goals. The information revealed by my research methods is useful for the scholars and to members of the Allensworth descendant community.

The members of the Allensworth descendant community that I communicated and worked with should not be viewed as a representative sample of the Allensworth descendant community at large. Rather, this group was self-selecting based on their interest and involvement in the Allensworth Cemetery. Location and logistics were major factors in determining who I interacted with, and when.

The Allensworth community members who are most invested and involved in preserving the cemetery are those who live in the area and those who have relatives who have been buried recently in the Allensworth Cemetery. While these individuals are not all the lineal descendants of deceased Allensworth pioneers, they should be viewed as descendants of practice. Previous studies have argued that populations who fill the same occupational niche as the archaeological population in question should be viewed as the modern-day descendants, especially if lineal descendants are not readily contact-able (Rockefeller 2016). I argue that this is the case with the Allensworth Cemetery. Among those working to improve the status of the cemetery are community organizers who aim to ensure that all residents of the Allensworth area are given their rightful share of consideration and resources. They work to improve and uplift their community, to get
better water for Allensworth residents to drink and to restore natural habitats. Other members of the Allensworth descendant community have worked hard to achieve educational goals and to pass the value of education on to their children, while others took up careers that were not traditionally open to African Americans in the past. Like the original founders of Allensworth, modern-day pioneers, such as Nettie Morrison, continue to work to improve life for their community, and to bring it successfully into the future.

Allensworth community members’ efforts also center on collaborating with various organizations and governmental entities to reach decisions that are beneficial for all. Planning is underway for the Atwell Island-Alpaugh-Allensworth Trail (AAAT) Project, which will result in a multi-use trail to connect the communities of Allensworth and Alpaugh with each other and to the nearby section of restored wetland on Bureau of Land Management property. Partners in this project include Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park, the Friends of Allensworth, at least one member of the Pierro family, the Tulare County Board of Supervisors, and Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners, whose directors include the president of the Allensworth Progressive Association. The project draws together the organizations that have the biggest impact on what happens to the Allensworth Cemetery and is expected to be mutually beneficial to all the aforementioned organizations and to the general public. Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners (2015) state,

The AAAT Project will offer recreational, educational, and regional investment opportunities, expanding access to the region’s outstanding bird-watching and wildlife viewing for community members, youth, and visitors alike and elevating southwest Tulare County as a tourist destination. The AAAT Project will act as a
taproot for additional projects including developing capacity for intra-community leadership and collaboration through an AAAT Intra-Community Advisory/Management Council and youth education programs that will nurture future stewards of the valley [Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners 2015].

While the trail will not run particularly close to the Allensworth Cemetery (Steven Ptomey 2017 personal communication), this development represents multiple regional organizations’ appreciation of the area’s unique natural and cultural resources, and their investment in promoting them. Increasing collaboration to achieve common goals is cause for optimism.

During the course of my involvement in this project it became clear that a way to successfully collaborate with the descendant community was to allow them to influence the direction of the research, so that my product is compatible and useful with their modern-day priorities and goals. Through listening to the Allensworth descendant community I worked to form this research in a way that represented their interpretation of the sociohistorical context surrounding the Allensworth Cemetery and the town of Allensworth as a whole. I worked to produce an end product that was a useful planning tool for the Allensworth descendant community during their ongoing efforts to preserve and protect the Allensworth Cemetery. I would argue that the nature of my interaction between this research project and the Allensworth descendant community can be matched to the higher levels of Arnstein’s (1969:217) ladder.

As described above, archaeologists employed in cultural resource management are often faced with the dilemma of having both a “business client” and an “ethical client”
(Mack and Blakey 2004:14). For this project, the dichotomy was instead between what I term “academic client” and “ethical client.” While there was less conflict that could be expected if this were a project taking place in a regulatory and/or commercial context, there was still a degree of division between my responsibility to the Allensworth community to produce work that was helpful to them, and my obligation to meet M.A. thesis-related deadlines in which I spent copious amounts of time writing about my efforts to achieve that result. It was also necessary to employ self-reflexivity and to be aware of the inherent power in my position as an academic. Furthermore, while I was not experiencing a direct monetary benefit from my involvement, the fact that I was getting a graduate degree and potential professional acclaim from this project was also important to consider.

Timescale was another aspect that varies between the two ‘clients’. While a thesis is ‘finished’ once the research questions are answered and the argument is made, the efforts of the AHCCRP are ongoing, and I will continue to make myself available to the Allensworth descendant community to advise and to help as I am able.

Consultation and collaboration with the Allensworth descendant community has undoubtedly changed the course of my project. As described above, interactions with members of the Allensworth descendant community clarified ways in which archaeological research could benefit the Allensworth Cemetery and its associated descendant community. Through reviewing the available information and speaking with members of the Allensworth community, it became clear that their wishes were for the cemetery to be respected and for it to achieve an official status that would afford recognition and protection. Consequently, I added this new research question and addressed it. By researching the steps that are necessary for getting the Allensworth Cemetery added to the
different Registries and assessing the history of the Allensworth Cemetery in terms of the eligibility criteria for the registers, I have provided the Allensworth descendant community with the tools to decide how to proceed and take action.

As stated throughout, my involvement in this project was very much defined by my interactions with members of the Allensworth descendant community. As an outsider to this community, it was crucial that I had someone who was available and willing to introduce me to other members of the community. Carnell Montgomery’s involvement in this regard made a significant and positive difference, and I found that it was effective to try and work along existing personal and organizational connections.

I also found that building up a relationship with the Allensworth community took time, both to build relationships, and the make progress on the project as a whole. My level of rapport with the community was no doubt influenced by the fact that, as a white person, I have not had the experiences that members of the Allensworth community have had.

During this project, it appeared to be helpful that I work to contribute something that is different from, but complementary to, the strong points of the community that I was partnering with. They have organizations and a network of personal connections and communication which could be complemented by my relatively narrow but specific area of expertise. I was uniquely qualified to do the site recording and assess the options in terms of the laws which govern cultural resources and ways in which the Allensworth Cemetery's historical importance can be officially recognized.
7. Conclusion

“If race follows the African descendant population beyond the grave, then racism, by definition, follows as well” (LaRoche and Blakey 1997:89). The African-American community of Allensworth has experienced and fought against the influences of a history of systematic racism recently as well as in the past. Since it is important for archaeologists to address the impact of their work upon the communities most affected by it, I have included in this thesis an awareness of the ways that racism has impacted African-American Allensworth residents more recently.

This project aimed to determine the boundaries and legal status of the Allensworth Cemetery, to determine what this resource consists of, to identify ways to successfully collaborate with the Allensworth descendant community, to determine the eligibility and necessary steps for the Allensworth Cemetery to be added to the National or State Registers as a means of protecting and preserving it, and to do all of this in a civically engaged fashion that contributed to social justice goals. The process of collaborating with those who are invested in the wellbeing of the Allensworth Cemetery has provided insight into how to effectively work with descendant communities and has guided and enriched the project as a whole. Completion of this project represents a useful addition to contemporary historical archaeology practice and scholarship, helps to fill a regional gap, and is timely in light of today’s political and social climate.

As described above in Chapter 2, archaeologists and heritage managers have recently become more interested the concept of archaeology as a form of civic engagement, in examining the impact of racism in archaeological contexts, and in involving descendant communities in archaeological projects. In terms of the Allensworth Cemetery specifically,
it was clear that in addition to the need to clarify its legal status and investigate how it could be placed under the protection of some governmental entity, there was room for discussion of the significance of descendant and other stakeholder involvement in the project, exploration of the concept of archaeology as a form of civic engagement, and for investigation into the role of race and racism in cultural resource preservation in the West.

While the eastern United States has seen successful collaborations between archaeologists, historians and descendant communities on African American cemetery projects, there is a distinct lack of such investigations in the West. This project, which focused on archaeological and archival study of the Allensworth Cemetery and collaboration with the descendant community has helped to fill this regional gap.

Through speaking with members of the Allensworth descendant community I was made aware of numerous connections between the past and the present, where instances of the racism and oppression that led to the founding of Allensworth are still being navigated by African Americans. By allowing an understanding of the various sociohistorical and modern contexts that surround the Allensworth Cemetery to inform my actions throughout the project, I have attempted to make this study relevant both to the lives of those involved and to national current events. By making communication and collaboration with Allensworth descendant community members a priority, I was able to learn about their opinions and goals regarding the cemetery. This consultation with descendant community members resulted in the development of a new research question and new goals for the project—namely, assessing eligibility for inclusion in the National and State Registers.
As Kelly Deetz (2015:32) asserts, "America was never post-racial, and the mythical idea that it ever was is quickly unraveling. We are in a state of moral and cultural turmoil and nothing is clear except that we live in a highly racialized and racist country that is struggling to measure its pulse." The sociopolitical climate and the disturbing rise of white supremacist groups following the 2016 Presidential election offer limited fodder for optimism, while social movements such as Black Lives Matter and organizations such as the Trayvon Martin Foundation continue to strive against entrenched systematic inequalities. Through my experience studying the history of the Allensworth Cemetery and viewing it within in a national context with other historical Black cemeteries, it seems clear that “the racism and inequality that plague African Americans in life are perpetuated in death” (Mortice 2017:n.p.). I have attempted to help connect the past to the present in a meaningful way, and to recognize ongoing impacts of systematic inequality.

It appears that there is a reality of selective remembering occurring at Allensworth. Visitors to the park can go into these reconstructed buildings, and talk to docents who are dressed in period costume. During one of my visits to the park, in addition to the usual Friends of Allensworth docents there was a group of AmeriCorps service members (all of whom appeared to be white), also dressed in period costume and demonstrating historical skills such as blacksmithing. For one thing, there was the paradox of white people doing everyday life things in a place that is unique for having been an intentional, utopian Black community. This situation also raised questions of whether enough value is being placed upon authenticity and integrity. The Allensworth Cemetery is one of the few elements of the historical town of Allensworth that is neither absent nor reconstructed. But it is not as easily digestible or pleasant as the town. Viewing and thinking about the cemetery raises a
lot of issues, about inequality, and long-term connections between the past and the present. It is a physical reminder of the inequality and still present wrongs that are not as palatable. While care and attention are given to the reconstructions of the Allensworth pioneers, the remains of the original builders of these houses lie relatively ignored.

A hopeful development is the February 2017 introduction of California Assembly Bill 783, which calls for the creation of the California Commission for the Preservation of African American History, Culture, and Institutions. While the potential impact of this law, if passed, on the Allensworth Cemetery, is unknown, it nevertheless represents a move in the direction of greater value and recognition being awarded to African American heritage in California.

Within the Allensworth Cemetery lies fragmented concrete marker whose only remaining inscribed words, “Our Beloved,” strikingly reminds one of the headstone in the Toni Morrison novel, in a poignant example of art mirroring life (Figure 29). In both the book and in reality, the survivors of ‘Beloved’ lacked the resources for a more elaborate marker. The ramifications of a history of oppression and systematic racism are written in the Allensworth landscape, and the history of Allensworth and its cemetery cannot be clearly viewed without this context. While the Allensworth Cemetery does not have elaborate headstones or unique funerary architecture, it is absolutely worthy of preservation.
Figure 29. Headstone of “Our Beloved.” Photograph by the author.
Appendix A-Institutional Review Board Application
IRB #2725

Institutional Review Board

Reply all

To:
Erica Thompson;

Cc:
Alexis Boutin;
Mon 10/17/2016 12:13 PM
You replied on 10/17/2016 3:50 PM.

Sonoma State University
Institutional Review Board

October 13, 2016

Dear Erica:

Subject: IRB Application # 2725, ALLENSWORTH: RESTORING THE CEMETERY OF “THE TOWN THAT REFUSED TO DIE”

I am pleased to inform you that your application to the Sonoma State Institutional Review Board has been reviewed and approved as Category A-2 Exempt. Please contact the IRB immediately should you encounter any unforeseen difficulties, or make any significant changes to your planned procedures.

This approval is effective from 10/13/2016 with no expiration date. Please notify irb@sonoma.edu when your project has been completed.

Thank you for your cooperation with our processes. We wish you the best of fortune as you complete your research project.

Sincerely,

Matthew Benney
Chair, SSU IRB
Description: This project involves participant observation and oral history interviews as part of thesis research towards a Master's Degree in Cultural Resources Management at Sonoma State University (SSU). The purpose of the research is to explore the knowledge, recollections and opinions of individuals associated with Allensworth.

During this study, you will be asked to answer some questions relating to Allensworth and the Allensworth Cemetery. Each interview is designed to last from 30 minutes to an hour in length. However, please feel free to expand on the question or talk about related ideas. Also, if there are any questions you feel you cannot answer or that you do not feel comfortable answering, feel free to indicate this and we will move on to the next question.

Confidentiality: All the information will be kept confidential. I will keep the hard copies of data in a locked file cabinet at my home and digital copies of data on a password-protected computer. Only me and the faculty supervisor mentioned above will have access to this information. Upon completion of this project, all data will be destroyed or will continue to be stored in a secure location.

Participant’s Agreement:
I am aware that my participation in this interview is voluntary. If, for any reason, at any time, I wish to stop the interview, I may do so without having to give an explanation. I understand the intent and purpose of this research.

I am aware that the data will be used as part of a Master’s thesis. I have the right to review, comment on, and/or withdraw information prior to the thesis submission. The data gathered in this study are confidential and anonymous with respect to my personal identity unless I specify/indicate otherwise. I grant permission for the use of this information for a
[Participant to initial permission(s)]
- Master’s thesis
- Published article or conference presentation

I grant permission to use one of the following [Participant to initial permission]:
- My full name
- My first name only
- Just a pseudonym

Additional conditions for my participation in this research are noted here:
[possible conditions: destruction of digital audio file, distribution of final product as well as other original material(s) e.g. transcription of interviews.]

I have read the above form, and, with the understanding that I can withdraw at any time, and for whatever reason, I consent to participate in today’s interview.

____________________  ______________________
Participant’s signature       Date

____________________
Interviewer’s signature
Appendix B-Communication
Report by Carnell Montgomery, Jr.

Thank God for the awesome work day at the Allensworth Historical Cemetery. About 10 volunteers met at the cemetery, on 4/8/17, one day after Lt. Colonel Allensworth’s birthday, to continue dignifying and cleaning-up the cemetery.

Following my instructions, two of the volunteers actually drove down a very muddy road that parallels the White River and found getting to the cemetery quite challenging. In the future I recommend that all volunteers choose Ave. 32 as the best way to get to the cemetery, coming from north or south.

The first volunteer to actually get to the cemetery was R.B. Pierro, Jr. and he did a wonderful job pulling weeds right at the entrance of the cemetery. His work shows that it would be awesome to pull those weeds now, during the rainy season, because the weeds, with a little elbow grease, pull right up. By the next event in Allensworth, the Old Time Jubilee, 5/20/17, those same weeds will not come up so readily. They will require a hoe, a shovel or some other tool to encourage them to come out of the ground.

The volunteers shoveled, hoed, weed ate and pulled weeds, etc. at the cemetery for a few hours, being led by another Pierro, a great-grand-daughter of Geneva Pierro, recently buried in the cemetery. Astaria helped clean the grave-markers of her great-grandmother and her grandfather, James Pierro.
After working at the cemetery a few hours the volunteers proceeded to the Allensworth Community Center. At the Center we were graciously welcomed by Mr. Kayode Kadara, [not pictured] a resident of Allensworth, who is a civil rights activist in his own right, being involved with many of the local boards, struggling to make sure that Allensworth is properly represented in affairs of the county.

At the Center we heard more of the Allensworth story from former Allensworth residents, Mr. Ralph, Mr. Sam & Mr. David Pierro.

Mr. Ralph Pierro spoke of his difficulties as a black man getting hired by the Delano High School District.

Mr. Sam Pierro, widely known as the Allensworth Artist, whose drawing of Lt. Colonel Allensworth is on display at the center, spoke of the difficulties of being a black farmer and a black artist.

Mr. David Pierro, the first black engineer for Santa Fe, stated that all while growing up he never imagined that a black man could get a job working for the railroad company. Although the tracks lay adjacent to their family farm in Allensworth and he heard the train whistle when it would pass by his house every day he could not envision himself as one of its employees. After getting out of the Army and living in Fresno with a wife and a family, he thought he would apply. He thought “maybe, just maybe there was a slim chance they might hire him as a janitor or something like that”. He was so surprised when they offered him a job as a fireman. He raised his hand as he pointed toward heaven and thanked God that after being hired as a fireman he eventually gained employment as the first black engineer to be hired by Santa Fe. Mr. Pierro was asked by librarian Kemp if he would write his story down so that it could be properly documented and stored in the Visalia Public Library with the other files on Allensworth.

Mr. Johnathan Waltmire, [not pictured] Visalia Public Library, informed us of an early black civil rights leader, Edmund Wysinger, who brought his son to school in Visalia on Oct. 1, 1888. Mr. Wysinger was told by the teacher, to take his son to the “colored” school,... So began a two-year journey through California's judicial system that ended in California's highest court, a journey that saw the end of the notion of separate-but-equal in area public
 EDMUND WYSINGER'S LEGACY WAS SOMEHOW LOST — SEEMINGLY STRICKEN FROM VISALIA'S PUBLIC RECORD AND CALIFORNIA HISTORY.” COPIES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

Ms. Kemp, speaking on genealogy; Ms. Erica Thompson, Sonoma State

Ms. Rebecca Kemp, also from the Visalia Public Library, presented on doing basic research on your family's genealogy— the CHEAP WAY. She shared "The Cheapskate's Guide to Absolute Beginning Genealogy"- doing family research without spending a lot of money. Copies available upon request.

Ms. Erica Thompson, who is doing her master's thesis on the cemetery, through the Cultural Resources Management Program of Sonoma State, told how she plans to use Ground Penetrating Radar, provided by Sonoma State, to locate the bodies of the people currently buried in the cemetery. Upon locating the bodies, some type of marker will be placed above ground. These markers will help determine the actual boundaries of the cemetery for the purpose of placing some type of permanent barrier, most likely a fence, around the cemetery.

This photo shows there is still much work to be done. Will you help us as we further dignify the cemetery and assist Ms. Thompson as she uses the GPS equipment to map out the cemetery?

May 20, 2017, 6:30—9:30 am is the next scheduled work day!
For more information please contact Carnell L. Montgomery, Jr., CScholarshipman@aol.com or 661-549-6953
Appendix C-Forms
**Resource Name or #:** Allenworth Cemetery

**County:** Tulare

**Location:** USGS 7.5' Quad Allenworth, Calif. Date 1954 T 24S; R 24E; SE ¼ of NE ¼ of Sec 17; Mount Diablo B.M. and

**Address:** Road 80 City Allenworth Zip 93219

**Other Locational Data:** APN# 333-379-088. To reach the Allenworth Cemetery from the entrance of Colonel Allenworth State Historic Park, turn left onto Road 84 and proceed for 0.6 miles. Turn right onto Avenue 36 and proceed for 0.3 miles, then turn left onto Young Road and proceed for 0.5 miles. Turn right onto Avenue 32, (a dirt road) and proceed for 0.1 mile, then turn left (south) onto Road 80 (a dirt road) and proceed for approximately 0.2 miles to an unmarked dirt intersection. Turn right (west) and proceed for approximately 130 meters then park. The cemetery begins on the south side of the road.

**Description:**
This resource consists of the cemetery of the historic town site of Allenworth, which was founded in 1908 and is the only California town to have been founded, financed and governed by African Americans. Most of the headstones are absent and there are numerous unmarked depressions and mounds situated in two rows, which run N/S. The cemetery plot contains the remains of six historic headstones made of various materials including marble and concrete. Records show that the Allenworth Cemetery contains at least 43 burials, the earliest of which dates to 1911, and the most recent to 2013.

**Resource Attributes:** HP40 Cemetery

**Resources Present:**
- Building
- Structure
- Object
- Site
- District

**Description of Photo:** Allenworth Cemetery overview, facing south.

**Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic

**Owner and Address:** "The Allenworth Cemetery Committee, J.A. Heckett, J.W. Singleton, and L. Smith" (deceased; clubbed title. No address available).

**Recorded by:** Erica Thompson
Sonoma State University
3801 E. Cotati Avenue
Rohnert Park, CA 94928

**Date Recorded:** 9 April 2017

**Survey Type:** Intensive

**Report Citation:** 2017 Thompson, Erica
Allenworth: Preserving the Cemetery of "The Town that Refused to Die." M.A. thesis, Department of Anthropology, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, CA.

**Attachments:**
- Location Map
- Sketch Map
- Continuation Sheet
- Building, Structure, and Object Record
- Archaeological Record
- District Record
- Linear Feature Record
- Milling Station Record
- Rock Art Record
- Artifact Record
- Photograph Record
- Other (list)
State of California — Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE RECORD

Page 3 of 5

Resource Name or #: Allensworth Cemetery

**A1. Dimensions:** a. Length: 82 ft. (E/W) x b. Width: 328 ft. (N/S)
   - Method of Measurement: [ ] Paved [ ] Taped [ ] Visual estimate [ ] Other: GIS
   - Method of Determination: [ ] Artifacts [ ] Features [ ] Soil [ ] Vegetation [ ] Topography
     - Cut bank [ ] Animal burrow [ ] Excavation [ ] Property boundary [ ] Other (Explain):

   - Reliability of Determination: [ ] High [ ] Medium [ ] Low [ ] Explain:

   - Limitations: [ ] Restricted access [ ] Paved/built over [ ] Site limits incompletely defined
     - Disturbances [ ] Vegetation [ ] Other (Explain): The majority of the historic grave markers are missing, and the
     - cemetery area has been compromised by agricultural activities over the years.

   - A2. Depth: N/A [ ] None [ ] Unknown [ ] Method of Determination: No subsurface testing performed on site.

   - A3. Human Remains: [ ] Present [ ] Absent [ ] Possible [ ] Unknown (Explain):

   - A4. Features: The cemetery contains six historic headstones. Numerous depressions and mounds are visible; they are roughly
     aligned in two rows. Records indicate that over 40 individuals are buried there. The cemetery area also contains modern fencing
     and a sign, and three modern burials.

   - A5. Cultural Constituents: None.

   - A6. Were Specimens Collected? [ ] No [ ] Yes

   - A7. Site Condition: [ ] Good [ ] Fair [ ] Poor
     - Site has been disturbed over the years by plowing and cultivation.

   - A8. Nearest Water: Unnamed seasonal canal is located approximately 1624 ft. to the west.


   - A10. Environmental Setting: The cemetery is situated on flat ground at the edge of the dry Tulare lakebed. Local vegetation
     consists of valley sink scrub and valley saltbrush scrub. Vegetation present on-site includes various grasses. Soils consist of
     siby, fine-grained alluvium.

   - A11. Historical Information: The Allensworth Cemetery was originally part of the town of Allensworth. Established in 1908, this
     colony was the only California town to be founded, financed and governed by African Americans. The Allensworth Cemetery
     was established in 1911 and contains over 40 known burials, ranging in date from 1911 to 2013. When Colonial Allensworth
     State Historic Park was established in 1976 the cemetery was not included in the boundaries. Noteworthy individuals buried
     in the cemetery include World War I veteran Charles Wells and early civil rights activist James A. Hackett.

     - Post 1945 [ ] Undetermined [ ] Describe position in regional prehistoric chronology or factual historic dates if known:

     - The cemetery was established in 1911. In 1921 a grant deed was filed showing the transfer of the cemetery parcel to the
       Allensworth Cemetery Committee.

   - A13. Interpretations:
     This cemetery is a significant site relating to African American history in the West as well as to the nationwide phenomena of
     utopian Black towns. Allensworth is the only California town to be founded, financed and governed by African Americans,
     and the cemetery contains the graves of several of these pioneering founders. This cemetery appears to be the most significant
     African American cemetery in Central California and it has both data and interpretive potential.

   - A14. Remarks: GPR survey has indicated the presence of several unmarked graves.

     Department of Anthropology, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park CA.

   - A16. Photographs: See Photograph Record
     Original Media/Negatives Kept at: 3860 NE HWY 20, Corvallis, OR 97330

   - A17. Form Prepared by: Erica Thompson
     Affiliation and Address: Sonoma State University, 1801 East Cotati Avenue, Rohnert Park, CA 94928
     Date: 12/5/2017
     Required Information
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<th>Time</th>
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<th>Subject/Description</th>
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<td>IMG_0724</td>
<td>Site overview</td>
<td>N 8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0725</td>
<td>Pierro graves</td>
<td>W 9</td>
<td></td>
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<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0726</td>
<td>Site overview</td>
<td>N 10</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0727</td>
<td>Fannie Byrd headstone</td>
<td>plan 11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0728</td>
<td>Fannie Byrd plot</td>
<td>E 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0729</td>
<td>Broken headstone with metal reinforcement &quot;Our Beloved&quot;</td>
<td>plan 13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0730</td>
<td>Anna Pierson headstone</td>
<td>E 14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0731</td>
<td>a depression</td>
<td>plan 15</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0732</td>
<td>Unmarked enclosure- point #25</td>
<td>E 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0733</td>
<td>James A. and Alice Hackett headstone</td>
<td>plan 17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0734</td>
<td>Overview from entrance</td>
<td>S 18</td>
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<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0735</td>
<td>Charles Wells headstone</td>
<td>plan 19</td>
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<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0736</td>
<td>Cement headstone, plaque missing</td>
<td>W 20</td>
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<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0737</td>
<td>Cow tracks</td>
<td>plan 21</td>
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<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0738</td>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>N 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0739</td>
<td>Wooden posts in southeast corner of historic graveyard area</td>
<td>N 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>IMG_0740</td>
<td>Wooden posts in SE corner of historic graveyard area; edge of sign</td>
<td>W 24</td>
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