

There is a growing concern now with putting People back into the Workplace, so to speak. In other words, to view industrial remains as a reflection, a manifestation, of human activity--social, political, economic, intellectual--and human decision-making, and not, as it is so easy to do, merely as objects in themselves. The recent works of Kenneth Hudson, formation of the open-air industrial museum at Le Creusot, France, large-scale studies of industrial communities being undertaken in Sweden and in Italy, and our own Marthas Vineyard Symposium [Industrial Archeology and the Human Sciences] clearly reflect that new concern. We have a serious problem; we've begun asking the questions, but so far we have no answers. Without a general behavioral approach to the study of the material culture of our industrial past we cannot arrive at answers. Moreover, I would suggest, we are going to have a problem justifying ourselves as a discipline. What business have we developing courses in industrial archeology? What can we learn from industrial remains that is unique?--that we cannot learn from other sources?

At this point I should make it clear that I'm *not* talking here about those who are involved in industrial archeology as a hobby, or for profit. These are important and clearly legitimate pursuits of many of those who join the Society. In fact, it is through these very members that historic industrial sites are coming to be permanently regarded as a significant aspect of our physical and cultural landscape. My concern now is with a neglected aspect of the field--industrial archeology as a scholarly discipline --with its ability to offer rich, potentially productive new sources with which to understand MORE about the past. Many in this Society and in Europe share that concern, of which a large part involves attempting a breakthrough in the area of methodology. More lessons in how to write up field notes or to take photographs simply will not do it. We need to discover ways in which to analyze and explain our data. We want to know what kinds of questions about the past can be asked of our material. It is not merely the mechanics of industrialization that we are thinking about. What about changing notions of work? What about the circulation of information or the diffusion of innovation in the past? What about the daily lives of those--the majority--the women and children as well as the men--who left no written records but whose lives were inextricably bound up in the very subject matter that we find so interesting?

Our investigations can offer to other social scientists a unique set of data. The humans responsible for the creation of these sites, or whose lives were affected by them, are gone. We study the sites that remain to learn more about what went on.

This, then, is a very important concern taking shape within industrial archeology. It is one that I know we will be hearing much more about in the future.

I want to tell you what a happy task it has been for me to serve as president of this Society. Thank you for the opportunity.