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From Goats to Gardens: Feeding Southern Colorado's Working-Class Poor

ABSTRACT

The events of the 1913–1914 southern Colorado coal strike and the cooperative work of the Colorado Coalfield War Archaeology Project provide the opportunity to explore archaeology's relationship to poverty, hunger, and social justice. This article considers poverty in evidence of worker foodways. I consider what kinds of foods were promoted, what foods were available and from where, what foods were eaten, and how they were prepared. This article includes a comparison of prestrike, strike, and poststrike contexts. In so doing, it reveals the futility of dichotomous categories of *deserving* and *undeserving* poor as they relate to a transformative project of working-class poverty. It suggests that the distinction between *deserving* and *undeserving* poor has been and continues to be about justifying particular sorts of intervention in people's lives meant to sustain exploitation of their labor.

Introduction

> One of these things is not like the others,
> One of these things just doesn't belong,
> Can you tell which thing is not like the others
> By the time I finish my song?

Poverty, hunger, social justice, and archaeology: at first glance these four terms may call to mind the classic 1970s children's song from the public television series *Sesame Street*—archaeology, right, archaeology doesn't belong? Consider poverty and hunger; the two are often linked in social-policy initiatives. The first of eight United Nations Millennium Development Goals seeks to "eradicate extreme poverty and hunger." Target three of this goal is to "halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger" (United Nations [UN] 2009:4). Hard-won gains since the early 1990s, however, have been endangered by the recent global recession (UN 2009:11). The UN's 2009 Millennium Report suggests that "the prevalence of hunger in the developing regions is now on the rise, from 16 percent in 2006 to 17 percent in 2008" (UN 2009:4). Poverty and hunger are also linked by national policies. The United States has implemented a series of federally funded public programs to ensure the deserving poor are able to meet their nutritional requirements. The Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is largely responsible for their execution. The variety of programs serve the segment of the population public policy has officially labeled the "food insecure," a politically correct derivation of "sometimes hungry." Official rhetoric also distinguishes between food insecurity and hunger. Hunger is defined as the "uneasy or painful sensation caused by lack of food" (USDA 2009). The USDA acknowledges that its measurement of food insecurity "provides some information about the economic and social contexts that may lead to hunger but does not access the extent to which hunger actually ensues" (USDA 2009). Contemporary public policy then acknowledges the materiality of poverty and the limited access to nutritional recourses that may result.

It seems natural for sociocultural anthropology to be involved in the ongoing global and national discourses on poverty and development, and, more pointedly, on hunger and social justice. Ethnographic research has the potential to focus attention on the social processes at work in poverty's production, to call into question its quantification and the homogenization of its effects and outcomes (Green 2006:1,124). On the surface, it is less clear that there is a role for archaeology in addressing poverty. Is archaeology, in fact, "not like the others"—does it not belong? No, archaeology, in fact, does belong because it has the potential to challenge the persistence of contemporary ideologies of poverty by exposing their roots in the policies, lived histories, and common material pasts that gave rise to today. Consider archaeologist Randall McGuire's suggestion that "the obvious triviality of archaeology for overt political action makes it a cloaked but significant weapon in struggles over the past" (McGuire 2008:16). It is these very struggles that influence and frame current public policy.

By drawing on the events of the 1913–1914 southern Colorado coal strike, this paper

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examines poverty as process (Chicone 2009:162, 2011)—emphasizing, according to Nicholas Rescher's (2002) description of process philosophy "modes of changes rather than fixed stabilities"—to explore how poverty (inclusive of both its materiality and ideology) changed following the conflict. The dominant historical narrative suggests significant improvements to miners' lives after the strike. So, how did the reforms implemented by John D. Rockefeller's (majority shareholder of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company [CFI]) Industrial Representation (or Rockefeller Plan), and the reconfiguration of the relationship between labor and capital impact poverty's production in the region? The debate that emerged in that era was whether the strikers represented a *deserving* or *undeserving* poor. This issue lies at the center of the following analysis.

The designation of *deserving* and *undeserving* poor survives today. It is, in part, what pushes charity organizations and public-policy makers to decide who should receive assistance and whose needs are legitimate (Katz and Stern 2001:3). Archaeologists Bryce Barker and Lara Lamb (2009) draw on this distinction in their work at Eagles Nest, an Australian Depression-era work camp. They define the *deserving* poor as "those people who desired work but were unable to find suitable employment, as well as those who were too old, young or too ill" (Barker and Lamb 2009:266). Barker and Lamb tie the 20th-century development of this idea to Weber's 1904 treatise, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Weber 2003). They draw on the work of Herbert Applebaum (1995) to suggest that the Protestant work ethic "encapsulated the notion of work as more than a means to an end in terms of subsistence, but one in which work is viewed as an obligation to society and community, and the foundation for individual respect both as a person and a worker" (Barker and Lamb 2009:266). Consider also Jodi Barnes's suggestion (this volume) that working poor women felt morally superior to people on relief. My analysis of materials from the Colorado coal-strike era expands on these considerations to include not only those that did not or could not find work but also the working poor—those that did work but were still poor—employing a broader definition of *deserving* and *undeserving* that is ultimately grounded in an expanded perception of responsibility. The *deserving* are the segment of the poor whose poverty is considered beyond their control, in other words, they are not responsible, they are either unsuccessful or physically unable to find work. In the case of the striking coal miners who were poor despite working, the union framed their poverty as the responsibility of the company, thus locating their poverty beyond their control. The *undeserving*, on the other hand, are thought to be poor because of something they did or did not do, in other words, they are believed to be directly responsible. Again in the context of the 1913–1914 southern Colorado coal strike the companies framed the working-class poverty that plagued their camps as the responsibility of the individual (Chicone 2009).

Poverty as Process

Objectified and quantified, poverty in the United States has been defined by a dichotomous shifting of blame and responsibility. Are the poor to blame, did they end up in their circumstances as a result of bad choices—or is it the "system"—does it exploit and disfranchise? Is poverty rooted in culture, as suggested by Oscar Lewis (1968), or in economics? These polarities are unproductive and work to obscure the processes and complex relationships involved in poverty's production. They result in inadequate and homogenizing public policies that systematically neglect the interests and conditions of America's working poor.

Contemporary Western definitions tend to objectify poverty in order to frame it as a discrete and quantifiable analytical category. Archaeologists instead need to focus on the multiple social relations and ideological influences that create poverty as a basis of difference. When poverty is taken as process (Chicone 2011) it is not constrained to a purely theoretical project, nor is it defined by a specific materiality; instead, it is subject to differing social, economical, and historical circumstances. A process approach examines how poverty has embodied a number of shifting positions across space and time, and how it takes on different manifestations depending on one's social and economic position. The way society defines poverty and the people who do the defining are also subject to particular historical circumstances. Acknowledging and understanding these histories serve to contextualize and shape poverty's contemporary manifestations.

Archaeologists who look at poverty need to move beyond an *object-centered approach*, as outlined in Chicone (2011). Such an approach reduces poverty to the quantification of its physical manifestations, thereby marginalizing its social and political implications as a project of difference. It results in the forced construction of socioeconomic indicators based on a structural view of class. Because poverty is not a discrete category of analysis, relying on its physical manifestation as its primary qualifier neglects its complex role in projects of difference and in the creation of unequal power relationships and complex social categories. This problematizes traditional Western definitions of poverty, both absolute definitions—like the poverty line that assumes a sustained threshold of basic needs—and relative definitions—that rely on a measurement of comparative disadvantage, a distinction between who is poor, poorer, and poorest, or who suffers from food insecurity versus who is hungry.

Archaeology also needs to move beyond a *representational approach* (Chicone 2011) to poverty, where direct comparisons between material culture and historically established ideologies have the potential of denying the depth of poverty's consequences. Archaeologically recovered artifacts are not simply characteristic of poverty (Chicone 2011). Archaeology should not be used as a divining rod to discover the poor, nor as tool for compiling a collection of attributes used as a descriptive yardstick. The articles in this special issue not only suggest that there is no universal consumption pattern of the poor, but they underline the need to build upon traditional archaeological quantification of material culture to reveal the "secret writings" that Randall McGuire (2008:36) suggests "hide and justify injustice." Consider this quote from the working paper "Hunger Hysteria" by Robert Rector (2007) of the conservative think tank, the Heritage Foundation:

> In reality, poor people are increasingly becoming overweight for the same reason that most Americans are becoming overweight: They eat too much and exercise too little ... Contrary to the claims of poverty advocates, the major dietary problem facing poor Americans is too much, not too little, food (Rector 2007).

Rector sets responsibilities squarely on the shoulders of the individual in the form of free choice—the poor are making bad food choices. The reader implicitly understands that the obese poor are *undeserving*, their obesity in this case suggests that they are in fact not poor—they have enough food to become overweight—rather their circumstances are a consequence of personal failure.

This article draws upon the cooperative work of the Ludlow Collective in an attempt to meld poverty, hunger, and social justice. The Colorado Coalfield War Archaeology Project (CCFWAP) is a collaborative effort between faculty and students from Binghamton University, Fort Lewis College, and the University of Denver; see Larkin and McGuire (2009) for a more detailed description. The Ludlow Collective's archaeological investigations included fieldwork at both the site of the former United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) tent colony at Ludlow, which housed nearly 1,200 strikers and their families, and the CFI company town of Berwind, Colorado. This research provides insight into the materiality and associated ideologies of working-class poverty. This article considers poverty in evidence of worker foodways. I consider what kinds of foods were promoted, what foods were available and from where, what foods were eaten, and how they were prepared. Beyond the descriptive materiality—which includes both physical objects and the relationships between them (Edwards and Hart 2004:3)—a comparison between Berwind's prestrike and poststrike contexts and the temporary tent colony at Ludlow offers insight into the relationship between ideological constructions and poverty's material production. In so doing it reveals the futility of dichotomous categories of *deserving* and *undeserving* poor as they relate to a transformative project of working-class poverty.

The analysis of Berwind, from both prestrike and poststrike deposits, focuses on issues related to the dynamics of the coal miners' community, such as ethnicity, cooking, and diet. Focusing on archaeologically recovered faunal remains, cans, glass, and food-related assemblages, a comparison of diet and consumption between pre- and poststrike contexts is made. Differences in the frequency of home canning versus mass-produced foodstuffs, alcohol use, and food-related ceramics are viewed in concert with associated ideologies of working-class poverty. In order to explore foodways during the strike, I focus specifically on the archaeological assemblage recovered from Feature 73 at the Ludlow tent colony.

Fire destroyed the original Ludlow tent colony in April 1914, when it came under the attack of coal-company employees and Baldwin-Felts Company private detectives under the command of the Colorado National Guard. The tents were riddled with bullets and then set ablaze. Once the smoke had cleared, 2 women and 12 children were listed among the 25 dead. Many personal belongings not typically found in traditional archeological deposits were preserved at Ludlow. Members of the Red Cross and others involved in the cleanup efforts that followed the colony's destruction pushed damaged possessions into the cellars dug beneath the tents during the colony's occupation. Covered with soil, the cellars preserved a discrete assemblage of daily life. Feature 73 represents one of these assemblages, affording an opportunity to explore artifacts connected to an individual household.

The conclusion of the strike had a significant impact on poverty's production; "setbacks and starvation" drew the miners back to the very companies they had rejected only months earlier. Tracing the influence of labor conflict on working-class poverty framed within a basic-needs approach and focused explicitly on foodways reveals that even though the strike resulted in changes to both associated ideologies and materiality, it did little to transform the perpetuation of poverty in southern Colorado. Initial reforms embodied in the Rockefeller Plan only worked to camouflage continued deprivation. Persistent designations of *deserving* and *undeserving* clouded substantive efforts at the transformation of poverty's production in the region.

Foodways and Community in Berwind

Miners emerged topside from a long day's work, greeted with the sweet smells of home-cooked meals wafting down through the narrow canyons. With an ethnically diverse population, Berwind was a crossroads of cultural traditions. This diversity was both embodied and embraced in the traditional dishes that passed across the miners' tables. "Children in the camps enjoyed the various ethnic cooking, and everybody's mother was noted for some special dish or other" (Wood 2002:326).

Family recipes, serving dishes, and even seeds were among some of the treasured possessions maintained by southern Colorado's immigrant women. Oral-history interviews suggest a range of traditions. The diversity of diet reflects the multiplicity of ethnicities and cultural backgrounds spread across southern Colorado. Despite sharing very similar economic, domestic, and social circumstances, miners did not all eat the same foods; several different "staples" were made in the kitchens of company houses that crisscrossed the canyon. Anthony Gurule, the son of a Mexican *mulero* (mule driver), fondly recalled the flour tortillas and pinto beans found at nearly all Spanish meals (Amie Gray 2002, pers. comm.).

Finding themselves isolated in the coalfields of southern Colorado, working-class women relied on the common language of food to bridge cultural divides and forge relationships. Anthony Gurule recalled, "It seems like they, they learned to cook from one another. The Italian ladies would, you know teach the Spanish cook something and a, it would be passed ... and um pretty soon everybody seemed to, to know how to cook each others' food" (Amie Gray 2002, pers. comm.). Chris Lovdjieff revealed a very special relationship between his mother Tereza, an Eastern European immigrant, and Mrs. Maddie Atkins, an African American woman, living in the Tobasco camp with her husband Charles. Tobasco, another CFI company town, was located just north of Berwind:

> Above all I remember the institutions of the Saturdays Mrs. Atkins spent with Mama at our house. The day was devoted to cooking and baking and that was how Mama learned to bake biscuits, pies, cakes, canned fruit, preserves, jellies. ... The great mystery was how they communicated. Mama knew practically no English and Mrs. Atkins's background had no connection with Yugoslavia. Yet I remember no difficulties at all. The talk was constant, the laughs were many, the good cheer and warm friendliness were unmistakable (Wood 2004:120).

Wood (2004) suggests that the social relations forged within the kitchens of the company houses formed much of the backbone and foundation for the collective action of Colorado miners. The personal relationships established between working-class women sharing coffee (Wood 2004) over the stoves and hearths of company-owned houses nevertheless took place under the watchful eyes of camp officials. CFI's interest in its employees reached well beyond the kitchen it provided in the standard company home. Prior to the strike, the employee magazine *Camp*

and Plant (1901–1904) and the annual *Bulletin: Sanitary and Sociological* regularly published features devoted to domestic science. Consistent with the projects of progressive reformers, CFI emphasized the necessity of a well-cooked meal.

Beyond the company publications, CFI sponsored a cooking instructor to travel from camp to camp. It was not enough simply to know how to cook; women needed to know how to cook "properly." Explicit rhetoric suggested that the whole family's welfare depended on the perfectly cooked meal. "Every woman should know how to cook food properly and to serve it in an attractive manner" (Rausch 1908).

There was more to CFI's very visible project of maintaining the value of well-cooked meals. Ideologies of working-class poverty were buried deep within company language. Professor Mary F. Rausch, head of the domestic science department at the State Agriculture College in Fort Collins, Colorado, made a direct correlation between poorly cooked food, poverty, and crime: "Growth does not depend on the food alone, but on the right kind and the proper preparation. Many children starve in the midst of plenty, because it is not the right kind of food. … Many of our criminals come from the tenement districts and the slums where the food is very badly cooked" (Rausch 1908).

Not only did poorly cooked food supposedly lead to crime, but it also led otherwise-competent men to drink, as avowed in the 1902 issue of *Camp and Plant*: "[B]adly cooked food, unappetizingly served, is in many cases an inducement for the laboring man to leave his home and seek compensation in drink" (CFI 1902d:489). By casually making these kinds of links, the company placed responsibility on the shoulders of its employees, and more to the point, on the shoulders of its employees' wives. It was no longer a matter of whether a family could afford nutritious food on the meager wages provided by the company prior to the strike and within the controlled environment of company towns; instead, the issue became whether or not the food that was provided, purchased, grown, or gathered by the miners was cooked properly by their women. A 1902 issue of *Camp and Plant* further supports this line of thinking: "[T]he question of food is most serious, yet it would be wrong to say that want of money is always the cause of malnutrition" (CFI 1902d:489). Meager wages did not lead to bad nutrition; poorly cooked meals did.

Cooking and All that It Entails

Notably, cooking included much more than choosing the menu and preparing the food. To imply that it was labor intensive is putting it mildly. Wood (2004:152) suggests that most recipes were made completely from scratch. This process included everything from acquiring food (whether purchased, gathered, or homegrown), to fetching fuel for the stove, keeping it stoked, hauling water, serving meals, and cleaning dishes. Besides cooking breakfast and dinner, women in the coal camps were often up packing miners' lunches well before sunrise. As miner's wife Josephine Bazanelle suggested, this may have included such items as "a couple of slices of bread, some cheese, some salami or ... a leg of cottontail ... or ... an apple, a couple of boiled eggs, and salt" (Wood 2002:129).

Homemade bread was a staple in the miners' diet both prior to and following the strike. Evidence of brick ovens survives from both the prestrike and poststrike occupations of Berwind. The remains of three brick-and-stone ovens were located in a prestrike occupation, and the remains of four ovens were located in the poststrike occupation. A description of a "typical" oven—reminiscent of those recovered archaeologically—ran in a 1902 issue of *Camp and Plant.*

> The mound shaped ovens, so generally used by many of our people, are interesting features of our camp. The Typical oven is about five feet high, with a fire brick floor, and with a door on one side at the base, while on the opposite side, one third of the way from the top, is a three-inch opening, which gives just the requisite draught. The oven is sufficiently heated from the inside by the wood fire, and after the coals have been removed, it will bake the bread of better quality than that baked in a stove (CFI 1902b:221).

The company did not provide outdoor ovens for its employees; if members of a household wanted an oven they had to construct it themselves, using mud brick and local stones. Marion DeBruno, a resident of Tobasco, recalled how her father had made her family's oven in the period following the strike: "[M]y dad made that oven himself. Lots of men did. Most families had their own and we used them all year long, summer and winter" (Wood 2002:213).

The process of production was the same whether it was 1 loaf or 20. This meant most women baked multiple loaves at a time. Figure 1 shows a woman from Berwind carrying several loaves of bread on her head. The photograph gives a good indication of their relative size. An interview with Susan Somsky, a coal miner's daughter and wife, suggests that her mother baked bread in this manner: "[W]e'd bake once a week. Fourteen loaves of bread a week" (Margolis 1984:53). Women would often purchase flour in bulk 100 lb. bags from the company store. They chopped the wood and fired the oven. After mixing the dough and waiting for it to rise, they placed the bread in the outdoor ovens to cook. Production engendered three types of social relations—production for sale, shared production, and alternating production.

In production for sale—the significance of bread is amplified when one considers that bread was available both from the CFI-sponsored store, the Colorado Supply Company, and from other women in the camp. Marion DeBruno, a long-time poststrike resident of the CFI town of Tobasco, recalled in a 1998 interview with Margaret Wood that her mother sold homemade bread to other families in town. Women could supplement their husbands' income by baking and selling bread to other families, or single men.

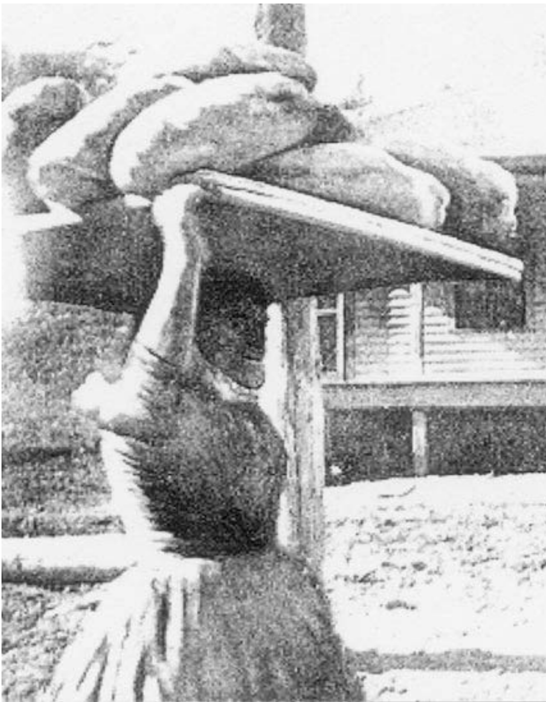

FIGURE 1. A woman from Berwind carries fresh-baked bread upon her head. This photograph dates to the period before the 1913–1914 strike (CFI 1902b:480).

In shared production—women often used the relationships forged within their small communities to negotiate shared access to outdoor facilities. Despite their popularity, all households did not maintain outdoor ovens. The transient nature of mining communities may have precluded certain families from investing the time and money required to erect ovens at each new camp. Several households may have shared an oven and baked their bread together. Wood's interview with Chris Lovedjieff, who grew up in a CFI coal camp following the strike, suggests that this was the case for his family. "The Mexican family next to us and an Italian family across the street had wonderful bake ovens in their yard with interior brick lining" (Wood 2002:325).

In alternating production—by alternating access to ovens, individual families could increase capacity; and by sharing bread pans this practice was easily accommodated. In his interview with Margaret Wood, Lovdjieff observed, "I don't think any one woman owned enough pans to do it" (Wood 2002:326). Households baked on a cycle and shared or sold the bread to other households that reciprocated.

While urban middle-class women had increasing access to household conveniences after 1900 (electricity, running water, and all sorts of appliances), southern Colorado's working poor relied on the same rudimentary tools and amenities on which they had depended for years. This was not unique to Colorado but was seen in rural settlements across the U.S. (Stewart-Abernathy 1992). Southern Colorado women used outdoor ovens year-round, despite the cold and sometimes snowy winters. Marion DeBruno put it in perspective when she suggested, "[T]here is no difference between summer and winter when you are poor. You use what you have" (Wood 2002:213).

An Analysis of Foodways in Berwind

The Ludlow Collective's work on suprahousehold consumption and diet forms a base for an

archaeological analysis of Berwind and Ludlow foodways (CCFWAP 2005:230–258). Using chi-square tests I compared functional categories of bottles, cans, food-related artifacts, food debris, unidentified glass, and unidentified iron in Berwind's prestrike (Locus K) and poststrike (Locus B) artifact assemblages. There were higher-than-expected observed frequencies for the artifact counts of the functional categories of food debris, cans, and unidentifiable iron in the Locus K (prestrike) artifact assemblage. The artifact assemblage from Locus B (poststrike) had higher-than-expected observed frequencies for the remaining categories of unidentified glass, bottles, and food-related artifacts. After determining that the artifact frequencies within the functional categories were not randomly distributed, six categories were explored in greater detail.

Food Debris: Fauna

A comparison between the faunal assemblages from prestrike (Locus K) and poststrike (Locus B) Berwind illustrates continuity in consumption patterns between the two contexts (CCFWAP 2005:231). Percentages of the total faunal assemblages for each identified specimen from both contexts were calculated from the observed number of identified specimens, or NISP (both pre- and poststrike). Of the total Berwind Locus K faunal assemblage (NISP=612) 94% was identifiable as was 98% of the Locus B assemblage (NISP=2,884) (CCFWAP 2005:235). Both contexts have a majority of medium-sized mammal or pig-sized bones, followed by large-sized mammal or horse-sized bones. The consistency indicates that there is not a substantial difference in faunal composition and, thus, in meat consumption between prestrike and poststrike contexts in Berwind.

The archaeologically recovered faunal material reveals a variety of animals included in the miners' diet, ranging from cattle and large mammals to rabbits, small squirrel-sized mammals, and fish. This evidence supports oral histories that frequently cite hunting and gathering as supplementary to the local diet. Before the 1913–1914 strike people often lived on the cusp of hunger, so that for many, hunting and fishing were necessary for daily survival. Angelina Savoy-Tonso recalled the lengths miners and their families went to put food on their tables:

> They used to go fishing. Oh when we find a fish, my God ... that was a feast. That was a treat just like Christmas then, you know. But you couldn't even get that because there was too many people. ... And you know what they were eating. There was no cats around. Even the cats, they kill the cats (Margolis 1985:520).

Bob Lee grew up in the CFI town of Tollerburg, just south of Berwind. He recalled hunting for squirrel and rabbit up Stock Canyon in the period following the strike. "My mother used to make the best squirrel stew you ever had" (Wood 2002:272). Josephine Bazanelle, a miner's wife and 33-year resident of Bear Canyon, also near Berwind, described similar poststrike additions to her family's diet:

> Well we used to go for jackrabbit or squirrel. We used to make salami out of jackrabbit meat, believe it or not. When we have a bird we have a feast. All kinds of it, turtledove, those black birds, those snow birds. All kind of birds. And we raised our four kids and pretty fat on that (Wood 2002:131).

Besides hunting for subsistence, miners and their families raised small domesticated animals both prior to and continuing after the strike, as evidenced in the faunal assemblage from both contexts. Chickens and goats were common fixtures in southern Colorado coal camps. There was a minimum number of individuals (MNI) of one goat for (prestrike) Locus K and a MNI of one goat for (poststrike) Locus B, and a total MNI of five chickens for Locus K and one chicken for Locus B. CFI upheld goats, or the "the poor man's cow" (CFI 1906:1), as an economically sound alternative to raising cattle. A 1906 issue of *Bulletin: Sanitary and Sociological* published an article advocating the benefits of raising goats. It suggested that in comparison with a cow, "the cost of the goat is much less ... the risk of loss by death is not so great; it costs less proportionally to feed. ... By keeping two goats a family may be provided during the entire year with milk. ... The goat is everybody's friend and cannot be recommended too highly" (CFI 1906:1–2).

The company's support for raising goats can be linked to a recurrent theme of shifting the responsibility of individual welfare onto the shoulders of their employees, despite the company's very public industrial welfare campaigns. If, as the company suggested, goats "are within

the reach of every family's pocket books, cost but a small amount to keep and demand little attention" (CFI 1906:2), then it stands to reason that if a family were not willing to purchase or care for a goat, this represented a "poor choice" and designated them as *undeserving*.

Goats accounted for a very small percentage (approximately 1%) of the entire faunal assemblage from both the prestrike and poststrike contexts in Berwind. An article in *Camp and Plant* published in 1902 contends that "the milk of several animals, such as goats ... may be used for drink and food" (CFI 1902f:329). In a 1998 interview, Marion DeBruno, daughter of a coal miner and resident of the CFI town of Tobasco following the strike, remembered her family's goat:

> When my mother had a nanny goat in the yard then we had milk. She would get that milk and use it in coffee. She would get some bread and put it in a bowl and pour some milk over it. That would be our breakfast (Wood 2002:212).

It is most likely that these goats were raised for their milk and not primarily butchered for their meat, although males and older animals would have undoubtedly been eaten by hungry miners.

Despite the fact that prior to the 1913–1914 strike, CFI recommended goat over cow, cattle made up 15% of the prestrike faunal assemblage (a MNI of 4), with goats comprising a mere 1% (MNI of 1). Beef was preferred for meat consumption over goat by the former residents of both Locus K and Locus B. Oral histories suggest that beef could be purchased from local farmers following the strike. Irene Dotson, a resident of Tobasco until 1921, revealed in a 2003 interview with Amie Gray: "Well ... that's where some of the ranchers made a living, you know, they'd butcher, butcher a cow or a calf or whatever, ... and make their own homemade sausage and they ... peddled it around the camps and ... I remember my dad buying some of it now and then. A lot of that was going on then" (Dotson and Rickel 2003).

Families also purchased meat from the local butcher both prior to and following the strike. Berwind's butcher shop was located just north of CFI's main store as recorded in a 1904 plat. "The meat market, which is run in connection with the store [The Colorado Supply Company], is well stocked with good meat. Each shop has a refrigerator plant which keeps the meat in excellent condition" (McCusker 1915:2–3). Meat purchased from the store was taken home, innards and all. Considerable labor was involved in preparing even purchased, butchered meat. When, for example, a butchered hog was brought home from the store, it had to be first scalded and the bristles scraped off before it could be cooked (Wood 2002:271).

Archaeologist April Beisaw's 2000 (CCFWAP 2005) butchery analysis of Berwind's faunal material suggests that the remains from Locus K (prestrike) Feature 2 represent the highest quality of meat available at that time, including multiple high-ranking rib cuts. It also represents the lowest quality of butchery out of all four Berwind features, however. The patterning reflects the purchase of larger cuts of meat and subsequent home butchery into smaller cuts. This observation highlights the pitfalls of direct links between high-quality meat and socioeconomic status. A strict *object-centered* (Chicone 2011) approach runs the risk of discounting working-class poverty in this context based on the presence of high-ranking rib cuts. The larger cuts of meat more likely reflect household conservation efforts that included the purchase of meat in bulk, however, rather than higher social status. The pattern may also be related to the significant number of boarders per household that women were responsible for feeding in the prestrike period.

Cans and Glass: Purchased and Mass-Produced Foods

A stratigraphic analysis of the Feature 1 midden at Berwind Locus K (prestrike) reveals a substantial increase in the number of canned goods after 1907. This suggests growing reliance on mass-produced food packaged in tin cans (Wood 2002:178). Wood's (2002:180) analysis of 78 tin-can vessels and 22 home-canning jars suggests that women became increasingly dependent on mass-produced foods between 1900 and 1910. This corresponds to an intensification of domestic responsibilities related to a corresponding rise in the number of boarders taken into workers' homes. In 1900, 14% of households included boarders; by 1910 this had risen over 30% to include 45% of all households (Wood 2002:148). Wood (2002:186) also suggests that

the increase in mass-produced canned goods was a "residue of both women's productive labor and their consumptive choices." Their labor was productive, in that it resulted in additional income from boarders, which translated into the ability to afford more expensive canned goods (Wood 2002:180–181). More boarders meant it was more efficient to buy canned goods; this cut food-preparation time and provided women with the opportunity to have even more boarders, which meant even more income.

To assume, however, that when given the opportunity working-class women would chose to spend their money on expensive canned foods in lieu of cheaper fresh, dried, home-canned, or bulk foods may be neglecting additional constraints and broader ethnic and gender relations at work within households. It could be that these decisions reflect constraints that may have had a stronger impact following the strike, possibly in response to the prestrike practice of taking in multiple boarders. Consider the following statement from Josephine Bazanelle, referring to poststrike conditions. Mrs. Bazanelle's husband had very specific ideas about food consistency and preparation, both of which directly impacted her economic and labor investments.

> Sometimes if I was sick or something and I couldn't make bread, I'd probably buy a loaf and put it in his lunch bucket and he'd bring back the bread. He said, "don't put any bought bread in my lunch anymore." So that's that. Sick or no sick, you're going to make bread (Wood 2002:129).

The larger number of mass-produced canned foods before the strike may have been a result of an increase in the demands that additional boarders placed on southern Colorado women during this time (Wood 2002:186). Canned food could be purchased from the company store, the Colorado Supply Company, or from two independently owned stores in Berwind, Aeillo's and Toller's. The Colorado Supply Company delivered goods to customers in their homes. A 1902 issue of *Camp and Plant* described the grocery and meat departments of the large Colorado Supply Company Store at Minnequa in Bessemer, Colorado:

> Here is found every variety of canned, pickled, and preserved goods, spices, dried fruits. ... In this department everything in the grocery line can be bought. Back of this is the order room and close by is the meat and fish department. ... The bakery and confectionery department is a model and is supplied from the bakery on the premises (Schenck 1902:502–503).

It would have been more efficient for women beset by increased domestic responsibilities associated with caring for boarders to order their groceries from the company store and have them delivered to their homes. In this respect the higher frequency of cans recovered from prestrike versus poststrike Berwind does not serve as a socioeconomic status indicator. Instead, it points to a variety of complex relationships and evolving coping strategies within the mining camp way of life.

In comparison to the assemblage recovered from the prestrike Locus K context, the excavations carried out at Berwind poststrike Locus B reveal an increase in the number of zinc canning-jar lids. Stewart-Abernathy (1992:114) suggests: "glass jars, known as 'fruit jars' or 'mason jars,' were an important tool in self-sufficiency. They provided people with the capability to store seasonal garden products and butchered meat for months, and thus permitted a varied and nutritious diet through the winter."

Wood (2002:360) argues that this increase following the strike corresponds to an economic strategy of food storage during the poststrike period (ca. 1914–1931). The frequency pattern is also reflected in the archaeologically recovered glass assemblage, though not as dramatically or statistically significant as the metal data. Of the glass assemblage from Locus K, 17% was identified as food-storage vessels, compared with 24% of the glass assemblage from Locus B (Wood 2002:360). A comparison between the two assemblages (Locus K and Locus B) reveals that whereas 98% of the metal food-related artifacts recovered from Locus K were tin-can fragments, they comprise only 55% of the Locus B assemblage (Wood 2002:362). Wood maintains that this was in direct response to the instability of the labor market that characterized southern Colorado coal mining in the 1920's. As dependable wage income decreased, families became less able to purchase more-expensive canned goods and were more reliant on home canning.

In the period following the strike CFI encouraged home food production and conservation (Wood 2002:363). The company house depicted in Figure 2 has a large vegetable garden visible on the right-hand side of the photograph. The

FIGURE 2. A woman and seven young children pose in front of company house No. 283 in Berwind, Colorado, ca. 1920s. A vegetable garden is visible on the right side of the picture. (Photo courtesy of the Bessemer Historical Society, MIN-BER-0015.)

emphasis on home canning served a dual purpose; it functioned as an extension of company policies implemented after the strike as part of the Rockefeller Plan, and in general compliance with a larger federal policy that sought to ease the burden on the national food supply during the First World War. The company itself suggested that "[t]he lawn and garden contests, conducted by The Colorado Fuel and Iron Company for several years, were given a new significance in 1917 by the national campaign to increase food products" (CFI 1917a:15).

The company offered home canning demonstrations hosted by the Colorado Agricultural College (Cooperative Extension Service) following the strike; this paralleled cooking demonstrations offered in the prestrike era. Over 40% of the women in Berwind (50 in number) attended one such program in 1917 (CFI 1917b:20). Emphasized as part and parcel of domestic science, home canning was presented as a modern process.

The dramatic increase in home canning seems particularly significant in Berwind, considering the topography of the camp and the impracticality of cultivating successful gardens:

> The houses in these two camps [Berwind and Tobasco] are perched on the side of the can[y]on, making it almost impossible to secure a garden or lawn around the house ... This physical condition also makes the question of fencing in the houses a difficult one. Some of the homes this side of the coke ovens can be fenced in to advantage, although there will not be much room for gardens (Roberts 1915:20–21).

Beyond the constraints of the local geography, the availability of water also impacted residential gardening efforts. Water remained a precious commodity in the dry dusty canyons of southern Colorado. A February 1902 issue of *Camp and Plant* (CFI 1902a:152) claimed that in the CFI town of Berwind, water was scarcer than almost any other beverage. Maintaining gardens in this hostile environment would have required significant time and labor on the part of families.

Women did not rely solely on their own gardens' production for home canning. They often

supplemented homegrown vegetables with those purchased from local truck farmers. This takes on particular significance given the instability of the coal market and increased transience of miners and their families in the period following the 1913–1914 strike. Well-established gardens were often impractical given the local terrain and mobility of potential gardeners. In a 1998 interview, Marion DeBruno revealed her family's relationship with local farmers following the strike:

> [M]y mom and dad had a wagon and if they had a five dollar bill they would try to come to town to buy produce. She could also get tomatoes from a man who would come round and sell them by the bushel. She would buy those tomatoes and can them (Wood 2002:212).

Bob Lee, a resident of Tollerburg in the period following the strike, also recalled the influence of local truck farmers on his mother's canning:

> When my mother was working developing her sauces and canning food she would use food she had grown in her own garden and she would buy stuff from the peddlers who sold produce from the truck gardens in the area. There used to be quite a big truck garden below Ludlow in Hoene. They would grow and sell cucumbers, tomatoes, radishes, green onions, potatoes (Wood 2002:271).

Home canning continued in the poststrike context of Locus B well beyond the end of the First World War. Field crews excavated seven of nine glass jars from levels dating to post-1919 (Wood 2002:365). While Wood (2002:366) suggests that this may have, in part, functioned to crystallize a generic American identity for immigrant women, it may also have been a product of the economic constraints placed on southern Colorado's working-class poor. Despite a decrease in the prices of canned goods at that time, it would not have been significant enough to impact the already-strained budgets of southern Colorado coal miners that were impacted not only by the coal industry but also a dramatic reduction in the number of boarders. By 1920 only 6% of households in Berwind took in boarders, in contrast to the almost 45% of households that included boarders in 1910 (Wood 2002). It may have also been a function of the social factors involved in the process of canning. Community ties were forged and maintained through the cooperative relationships of women.

Foodways and Community at Ludlow

During the 1913–1914 strike miners and their families were forced to leave their homes in the company-controlled mining camps that dotted the southern Colorado landscape. Relocated to the tent colonies supplied by the UMWA, striking miners relied on the union for basic provisions, including food, which was furnished at cost from union commissaries (Lawson 1913). As Victor Bazanelle suggested in a 1976 interview with Eric Margolis: "We were getting $3 a week for food, and we were making it. Potatoes, sometimes a little meat" (Margolis 1985:77). Supplies were also available in stores organized and run by the strikers. Examples of these stores could be found in Lafayette and Louisville, Colorado, both just outside Denver (Gompers 1915:3).

Figure 3 displays the "fresh and nutritious" foods supplied by the union for the strikers. Figure 4 shows the wives of strikers preparing food en masse in a kitchen at Ludlow. The UMWA sought to create a sense of solidarity that centered on common meals and the community kitchen as represented in these union photographs. The archaeological investigations of Ludlow, however, reveal a different story than the one suggested by these images. An increase in the amount of mass-produced foods (tin cans) at Ludlow compared to prestrike Berwind reveals that miners were not eating many shared home-cooked meals, despite what is suggested in these photographs. Instead, miners and their families relied on individual strategies and more-expensive expedient food options to supplement their diets.

Strikers set up stoves on the bare floors of their tents—pipes jutted up through the canvas roofs. Stoves not only provided a place to cook and prepare meals, but they also offered heat during the dreary winter months. After it was destroyed by fire, the Ludlow tent colony looked like a wasteland with the remains of stove pipes towering over the piles of rubble (Figure 5).

An Analysis of Foodways in Ludlow

When the Ludlow foodways assemblage is compared to both Berwind contexts, significant differences begin to emerge. There were more tin cans recovered from Ludlow than either pre- or poststrike Berwind, comprising 14% of the entire Ludlow artifact assemblage (CCFWAP

FIGURE 3. Strikers at the Ludlow tent colony pose with onions, celery, bread, a full gunnysack, and a washtub full of spinach, ca. 1913–1914. (Photo courtesy of the Denver Public Library, Western History Collection, DPL X-60388.)

FIGURE 4. Strikers and their wives prepare food in a kitchen at Ludlow, ca. 1913–1914. Bread, milk, and jam can be seen on the table. (Photo courtesy of the Denver Public Library, Western History Collection, DPL Z-215.)

FIGURE 5. View of the ruins of the Ludlow tent colony, 1914. Stovepipes jut up from the debris and pepper the landscape. (Photo courtesy of the Denver Public Library, Western History Collection, DPL Z-199.)

2005:236). This may indicate an even greater reliance on mass-produced canned foods during the strike than in the prior period. Significantly more condiment bottles were recovered from Ludlow than either of the two Berwind contexts (CCFWAP 2005:241); they comprise 37% of the Ludlow assemblage, compared to 3% of prestrike Locus K and 12% of poststrike Locus B (Table 1). Similar to the evidence provided by the archaeologically recovered tin cans, condiment bottles are also indicative of an even greater reliance on mass-produced foods during the strike, in contrast to the scenes captured by the UMWA photographs.

Notably less wine-bottle glass was recovered from Ludlow than both Berwind contexts (Table 1). In fact, excavations recovered no wine-bottle glass from disposal contexts at Ludlow, including Feature 70 and the Locus 7 arroyo. Beer-bottle glass makes up a mere 1% of the Ludlow assemblage, compared to 12% of the assemblage at Locus K and 48% at Locus B in Berwind (Table 1). Despite the decrease in beer-bottle glass when compared to prestrike Berwind, there is a marked increase in the percentage of liquor-bottle glass. Liquor-bottle glass makes up 23% of the Ludlow assemblage compared to 12% of the assemblage of bottle glass with identifiable contents from Locus K and 2% from Locus B at Berwind (CCFWAP 2005:241).

The pattern that emerges at Ludlow is particularly interesting in light of the UMWA's policy on alcohol. Hayes, a union representative, testified to the Commission on Industrial Relations (CIR) that "the United Mine Workers of America does not allow any of its members to tend bar or to sell intoxicating liquors, and that a great many union fields have voted dry" (CIR 1916:7,197). Liquor bottles may have been as easily concealed from union officials as beer bottles, but would

TABLE 1
PERCENTAGE OF THE BOTTLE ASSEMBLAGE FOR BOTTLES WITH AN IDENTIFIABLE CONTENTS FROM PRE- AND POSTSTRIKE BERWIND AND LUDLOW

	Berwind Locus K (Prestrike)	Ludlow (Strike)	Berwind Locus B (Poststrike)
Beer	92 (12%)	2 (1%)	191 (48%)
Beer/Soda	15 (2%)	6 (4%)	7 (2%)
Condiment	24 (3%)	59 (37%)	2 (1%)
Jars	22 (3%)	16 (10%)	48 (12%)
Liquor	97 (12%)	36 (23%)	6 (2%)
Pharmaceutical	450 (58%)	36 (23%)	127 (32%)
Wine	80 (10%)	0 (0%)	12 (3%)
Other	–	4 (3%)	4 (1%)

Note: Based on CCFWAP (2005:113,table 33).

have provided striking miners a lot more “drunk” for the volume.

The union, like CFI, made direct links between alcohol consumption and moral degeneracy. The dominant middle-class ideology conflated alcohol use with the *undeserving* poor. In order to prove to a national audience that these strikers deserved support, the UMWA forbade alcohol consumption in the tent colonies. Similar to the situation in CFI’s camps, miners continued to consume alcohol despite explicit UMWA policies to the contrary. Because my analysis frames poverty as process, its continued production does not fit within the either/or dichotomy of blame and responsibility, *deserving* and *undeserving*. Alcohol consumption did not make the working class poor, nor should it be assumed that the working class drank because they were poor. This conversation needs to be severed from recycled prejudices about alcohol’s role in the broader discourse on poverty.

“While the Grass is Growing the Horse is Starving” (UMWA 1915a:2)

Union support for the strike began to wane in late 1914, strikers faced another long cold winter, and defeat was imminent. Membership dues dropped as miners were forced to choose between feeding their families and continuing the fight: “The fear of starvations seems to be the cause of many men failing to keep up their membership” (Gompers 1915:2). Colorado delegates voted to obey their leaders and end the strike on 7 December 1914 (McGovern and Guttridge 1996:310). Union relief was suspended later that spring.

As the winter dragged on, the cries for help became louder. The local district of the UMWA held conventions in February and again in March 1915. To browse the pages of the *Industrial Bulletin* (1915–1929)—the company’s employee publication—it would seem that life had finally returned to “normal,” however. Miners had returned to the fold; they had made their way back to the warmth and safety of the company’s mining camps. Happy to be back at work, they patiently awaited the much-anticipated improvements in housing and social welfare. What is missing from these pages are the hundreds of miners still out of work and no longer receiving strike benefits. Decline in the demand for coal from 1913–1914 meant that even though the strike had ended, many miners no longer had jobs to which to return.

Conditions had reached a critical level; appeals became desperate, general survival the focus. In a letter to Edward Doyle, Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, wrote, “it is a sad state of affairs to witness the hundreds of miners who have so bravely fought to establish their rights in this State on the verge of starvation after having lost that gallant struggle” (Gompers 1915:3). John Lawson, UMWA

district president lamented, "there will be no children starved if I can help it. Something has got to be done no matter where it comes from" (Lawson 1915:7). Appeals to Rockefeller himself reflect the desperation of many involved. In a letter addressed to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., dated 31 December 1914, Seth Low, chairman of the Colorado Coal Commission, suggests that "[o]n the outside in the tent colonies ... so far from there being plenty, there is barely food enough to support life" (Low 1914:1). He warned, "[W]hen men are starving, no matter for what cause, they are apt to act desperately." John Shearer, adjutant of the Colorado Springs, Colorado, Salvation Army, appealed to Rockefeller in January 1915 looking for additional relief. He writes:

> a lot of poverty and suffering is being experienced among the poor in this City; among them being Striker's and their families ... my estimation of the present conditions here, is that it would take $1,000 worth of Fuel, Groceries, Clothing, Medicine and Rent to cover the needs of these people during the next few months of severe winter weather (Shearer 1915).

Working-class poverty in southern Colorado was pervasive, despite CFI's attempts to conceal its persistence. On 22 February 1915, the UMWA held a special subdistrict convention of District No. 15 in Denver. Starvation and lack of food were powerful themes evoked repeatedly by the representatives. Delegate Cook complained bitterly that despite the support promised by the union, women and children were "the first to be cut down and at this time are starving" (UMWA 1915a:2). There seemed to be little optimism. Secretary Doyle testified that "men have gone from mine to mine in search of work and have been told 'we will starve you to death, or until you know not to strike when you are told'" (UMWA 1915a:2–3).

In March 1915 a report by the Colorado Committee on Unemployment Relief suggested that after strike relief had been suspended by the union earlier that month, "many families ordinarily self-supporting and thrifty were suffering the greatest privation. Many of them, if not actually without food, were on the verge of starvation" (King 1915). The Colorado Committee on Unemployment Relief portrayed these former strikers as "deserving"—ordinarily "self-supporting and thrifty." It was the fault of circumstances beyond their control that resulted in their present and temporary situation. According to the committee, these miners deserved assistance.

Another special meeting of District No. 15 of the UMWA was held on 4 March 1915. Board member Morton expressed great concern for the rapidly deteriorating situation: "[W]e have women and children who are hungry and we need money for them. ... If you beg you are vagged [treated like a vagrant], if you steal you are sent to the penitentiary" (UMWA 1915b:2). Board member Richardson confirmed the desperate circumstances: "[W]e have men who steal cattle because of hunger; they are not bad men but they are hungry." The situation had collapsed around them; board member Morton lamented, "I must sell my house to get flour and pay my taxes" (UMWA 1915b:5).

In the spring of 1915, the store organized by striking miners in Lafayette, Colorado, was forced to close its doors. Gompers suggested, "fully one hundred and eleven families would be facing starvation" upon its demise (Gompers 1915:3). The union had abandoned the strikers; those who returned to work were the lucky ones. They were once again able to feed, clothe, and shelter their families. The compassion that permeated Rockefeller's plan was mostly superficial, however, cosmetic improvement at best for the very public plight of the working poor. Based on an analysis of archaeological deposits at Berwind, poverty's production continued. Following the strike, labor's supporters continued to be critical of Rockefeller, crying out for "Justice not Benevolence!"

> Club houses for the coal camps! ... Club houses for what? In which gaunt, hungry, overworked and sorrowing men might meet and mourn? ... In which careworn, starved, trouble-scarred and cheerless women might gather and sob out their heartaches? ... In which little children might assemble their fleshless bones and pinched and pale faces to moan out the bodily distress that wrecked their anemic bodies? A club house is not for the famished. It is not for the broken of spirit, the hopeless of heart, the downtrodden of soul (Lewis 1915).

Conclusion

This article has focused on working-class poverty located in the relationship between associated ideologies and materiality. It uses the basic human need of food as a framework to see how

working-class poverty changed as a result of the labor/management conflict that was at the heart of the 1913–1914 strike and the industrial relations plan that followed. In working through issues related to ethnicity and diet, I drew on the work of Margaret Wood (2002, 2004) to look at the ways immigrant women use food preparation to establish social networks within the isolation of the coal camp. By including cooking in the conversation I was able to highlight the attention and interest CFI had in this daily task. By consistently asserting what their employees "should" do in order to live within *their* means, CFI shifted responsibility for nutrition to the miners and, more specifically, their wives. Miners, however, negotiated their poverty in a much different context. By not only building, but also sharing outdoor ovens, they were able to take advantage of social networks in order to maximize their productivity. This was a consistent strategy both prior to and following the strike.

CFI's ideological constructions of working-class poverty also infiltrated the realm of the miners' diet. Archaeological deposits together with oral histories demonstrate how families supplemented their modest meals with wild game; this was a direct response to need. The continued practice, both pre- and poststrike, illustrates that conditions were not significantly altered with the adoption of the Rockefeller Plan, despite company rhetoric to the contrary.

Similar to the conclusions drawn from CFI's interest in cooking, its promotion of goats as the "poor man's cow" in the prestrike era was an additional way for the company to disclaim responsibility for its employees' conditions. If raising a goat were feasible despite a low income, and cheaper than a cow, then the family that *chose* not to keep goats placed itself at risk. It was a bad decision that directly impacted family members' nutrition and, CFI reasoned, the result was no longer the responsibility of the company—the employees were *undeserving*.

The discussion of purchased versus home-canned foods furthers the argument. The ideologies that were constructed nationally around the purchase of mass-produced goods consider their economic impact on a family. The large assemblage of tin cans recovered from the prestrike versus poststrike context at Berwind and the even larger number recovered from Ludlow are not direct socioeconomic indicators. It has been suggested that the reduction in cans following the strike was directly related to a decrease in the number of boarders. The decrease in boarders impacted the potential income for a family, while at the same time freeing up women's labor, which had previously been focused on their care. During the strike the instability and isolation faced by the strikers would have necessitated a practical food supply. The change in strategies following the strike reveals the malleability of poverty as process (Chicone 2011). Changes in coping strategies do not mark the eradication of poverty but, rather, a continued negotiation.

A consistent theme in this discussion of workers' foodways is the CFI's project of relocating responsibility for employee well-being to the individual, despite the company's very public attempts at corporate welfare. By providing employees with what it viewed as the "proper" tools—whether it was how to cook, what to cook, how to can, what to can, what goods to purchase and from where, what animals to raise, or how to spend one's free time—it was up to the individual to accept these lessons. This approach was consistent with CFI's defense of free labor. Benevolent programs were a way for the company to relocate responsibility for the poverty that plagued its mining camps back to the individual.

Dwindling economic support ultimately forced miners to return to the very companies and camps they had denounced only months earlier. The company's public improvements in the form of improved housing and general camp beautification (Chicone 2009) did not have a lasting effect on daily life. Miners continued much in the same way they had before the strike, baking bread in their outdoor ovens, hunting small game for dinner, and keeping domesticated animals. While canning did seem to affect the purchase of mass-produced foods, this change is tied to the poverty as process. I do not suggest that after the strike miners' lives did not change, they did change, what is remarkable is that this change did not signal an eradication of poverty—poverty continued despite the improvements espoused in the Rockefeller Industrial Relations Plan.

This article highlights the futility of the "responsibility" debate that continues to pervade current public discourse. Valuable time is spent sanctioning responsibility—is it the poor that are to blame for their condition or is it the system? Searching for either/or explanations to justify and

warrant social reform misses the larger project of locating poverty as process and of understanding why and how specific categories get constructed, and the multiple contributing factors to their creation—social, economic, ideological, material. It distracts policy makers from larger considerations. The distinction between *deserving* and *undeserving* poor has been and continues to be about justifying particular sorts of intervention in peoples' lives meant to sustain exploitation of their labor.

This article sought to confirm the relationship between poverty, hunger, archaeology, and social justice to reveal the influence past constructions have on current public-policy debates. McGuire (2008:229) maintains that "knowledge is a complex product of the observations that we can make of the archaeological record and the social context that we make them in." So, it is within the context of one of the worst global economic downturns in recent history that I shift my focus to exploring the connections between poverty, hunger, social justice, and archaeology. As more and more people are finding it difficult to meet their basic needs it is imperative that society be mindful of the historical bias of popular claims about poverty. We need to consider how we frame poverty within a larger public dialogue. Archaeology has a contribution to make to this continued discourse.

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