

4-30-1937

## Abstract of Photography in Archaeology

Harvey Tripp

D. Lehmer

Follow this and additional works at: [http://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nm\\_anthropologist](http://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nm_anthropologist)

---

### Recommended Citation

Tripp, Harvey and D. Lehmer. "Abstract of Photography in Archaeology." *New Mexico Anthropologist* 1, 4 (1937): 54-56.  
[http://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nm\\_anthropologist/vol1/iss4/13](http://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nm_anthropologist/vol1/iss4/13)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Anthropology at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in New Mexico Anthropologist by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [disc@unm.edu](mailto:disc@unm.edu).

These heads are not necessarily human heads. Any animal, such as a jaguar, that has committed a crime against an individual or a village may be killed, and the head mounted.

The drying of heads serves three purposes. They may be used as fetishes of success in war or the hunt, as a mere trophy, and at the same time as an insult to the dead and his family and tribe. Therefore, Jibaros seldom take the head of a blood kinsman.

After a head is taken, custom demands that the slayer celebrate a feast in honor of his victory. The feast may take place, however, with only the victor and his immediate family present, especially if he is poor. This is not frowned on by the remainder of the village, although a general air of festivity prevails.

After appropriate ceremonies and propitiation of the gods, the head is prepared the following way. A long cut is made from the top of the scalp down the back. The scalp and skin of the face are then drawn off much in the same manner as a rabbit is skinned. The face presents a problem, as the skin does not peel away, but must be cut free of the flesh. The skull is thrown away. The facial skin and scalp are then boiled for a considerable length of time, then dried in the sun. The incision is then sewed up, the neck being left open.

Hot stones are then introduced and moved about inside to burn away parts of flesh and blood still adhering, and to drive away the soul of the dead man that is supposed to linger in the scalp.

The next step is the use of hot sand. This is heated in a 'hakachi' or broken bit of a clay pot. This is always carried on the war trail, and is used time after time by only one man. It is considered bad luck to use another man's 'hakachi'.

The head is then filled halfway with the sand, and is moved about so that the sand may burn all portions equally. This process is repeated many times, together with frequent scrapings of the interior to remove the excess flesh. The heat tends to shrink the head, and by pinching and moulding the skin, the features are preserved with such fidelity. The completed head is from one fourth to one third the size of the original. After being washed, it is dyed black by charcoal.

H. Meyers

#### Abstract of PHOTOGRAPHY IN ARCHAEOLOGY

Many scientific fields have found photography a valuable asset, and in archaeology, photography, with its new developments, has proved exceedingly important. It is my contention that photography can be enhanced in its data value if it is produced within the bounds of good composition.

Firmly believing that the miniature camera has solved many of the problems which are constantly arising in field work, I will endeavor to set forth a few of its advantages. In the past, the

tendency has been towards bulky and expensive equipment. The expense involved in the use of larger films and plates, as well as in the initial cost of equipment, is also apparent in the case of developing materials and paper. The length of time necessary to set up, focus, and expose the large camera is considerably greater than is necessary for a "minicom". With large cameras there is also a subconscious tendency to sacrifice the most advantageous position in favor of the most convenient if the two do not coincide. The small cameras have at last been sufficiently perfected so that they match and often surpass the larger variety in mechanical features. The smaller weight and bulk of the miniature are also strong points in its favor, and the time honored objection to the small prints produced is easily overcome by use of the enlargement. Enlargements often make an improvement in composition possible through masking out certain undesirable features. Miniature slides may be made and shown in a special projector (one very satisfactory model retailing for \$25) which is small enough that it may be easily transported from place to place.

For a minimum of photographic field equipment, I strongly commend any of the several good miniature cameras with a reasonably fast (at least f45) lens; a detachable portrait and a copying lens; a telescoping metal tripod; a cable release; and any of the selenium light cell exposure meters. It is often wise to add a telescopic lens to this list, especially for survey work in rugged and broken country where sites are often inaccessible.

For field developing I advise the use of the so-called "day-light loading tank" which is far superior to the old trade developing method especially when used under adverse conditions.

During the course of rather extensive photographic work I have developed certain rules and techniques that considerably simplify field and laboratory work. For definition and fine detail the subject should be taken in a bright shade. If, when in situ, the subject is not already under such conditions they may be produced by the use as a reflector of a piece of white cloth about one yard square, which has been stretched on a light, rigid, collapsible wooden frame. If it is impracticable to produce the desired condition with the cloth alone a small mirror may be used to reflect sunlight to the cloth from whence it may be thrown onto the subject.

Another interesting technique in lighting has been developed by the School of Middle American Research of Tulane University. For photographing card inscriptions Dr. Blom has very successfully used direct electric light from a standard reflector, the current being produced by a small gasoline powered portable generator.

In photographing artifacts in the laboratory it is often a question whether direct light or a luminous shade is preferable. I believe that specimens are reproduced to their best advantage when they are placed on a light background with the later type of lighting. Such conditions are most favorable for bringing out the most minute features of the subject. The light background serves as a neutral and simple backing which will tend to reflect a soft light upon the specimens.

In some instances the problem of accentuating certain parts of the specimen, as in the case of stone artifacts of one solid color. Such parts, as well as shadows, may be accentuated by retreating with water or coating with a light oil just before making the exposure.

Photography in the field of science has just begun, and that it will continue to gain importance and recognition as time elapses has been proved by its increasing importance.

Harvey Tripp

(abstracted by D. J. Lehmer)

SOME INTERESTING NOTES ON FOLSOM  
AND YUMA POINTS

Joe H. Toulouse, III

In studying the distribution of the Folsomoid and Yuma points in the United States, it has been found that this distribution has been affected by a number of geographical features. The two main features of topography, which have thus aided or limited this spread, are those of the Rocky Mountains and the various principal river drainages of the United States. In plotting the distribution of the Folsomoid points, which seem to have the widest display, it has been found that they follow down the eastern foothills of the Rockies and branch eastwards along the Missouri river and its tributaries. The main eastern spread is along the Ohio River and into the states bordering it; also these particular types of points spread up and down the Mississippi but not in the quantities in which they are found along the Ohio and Missouri. Another interesting distribution in the East is among the "Finger Lakes" of New York and along the Mohawk Valley. This distribution given above is for the Folsomoid points as not much is, as yet, known concerning the distribution of the Yuma type because of the style shading into similar forms and chipping to be found among certain of the types from the Mound Area.

The western spread is for the most part along the "High Plains" area or the eastern foothill area of the Rockies as far south as the southern tip of Texas.

The main western distribution does not appear to have spread much farther west than a north-south line drawn through the center of the state of New Mexico, though a number of points have been found west of this line, they are in such minority that it has been suggested that they may have been traded to the West coast (Dr. H. P. Mera, verbally). One point of these isolated items was found in the Dells region of Washington and Oregon, this region is known as a famous trade route (the point was Yuma in type.) Another, this time a Folsomoid, has been reported from the Mohave region (See the "New Mexican Anthropologist," vol. 1, no. 1, p. 12.) Two others have also been reported from the coast, a Folsomoid on the Klamath River, California; and a Yuma from the southeastern corner of Oregon. Other data