

ARTICLE

The Names We Know: The Complexities of Coauthorship and Gender in Archaeology Peer-Reviewed Journals[‡]

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Abstract

Authorship metrics are a key component of academic advancement. Given recent increases in the publication of collaborative, multiauthored articles, we examine patterns in the perceived gender of authors of peer-reviewed journal articles with five or more coauthors in 11 academic archaeology journals. Our results suggest consistent patterns in lead and last authors and in coauthors. Men are more likely to serve as both lead and last authors and to include far more men than women as coauthors on their publications. We consider the ways gender homophily, friendship networks, and other forms of often unintentional exclusion may have a negative impact on the careers of women and members of other marginalized communities in archaeology and propose recommendations to address these issues within the field. In addition to greater individual reflexivity around coauthorship decisions, we encourage the development of clear guidelines on author ascription by archaeological organizations and publishing outlets and advocate that institutions adopt both total publication and fractional publication counts as measures of individual productivity.

Resumen

Las métricas de autoría son un componente clave del avance académico. Dado el reciente aumento en la publicación de artículos colaborativos de varios autores, examinamos los patrones en el género percibido de los autores en artículos de revistas revisadas por pares con cinco o más coautores en once revistas académicas de arqueología diferentes. Nuestros resultados sugieren patrones consistentes en los autores principales y los últimos y coautores. Es más probable que los hombres actúen como autores principales y últimos e incluyan a muchos más hombres que mujeres como coautores en sus publicaciones. Consideramos las formas en que la homofilia de género, las redes de amistad y otras formas de exclusión a menudo involuntaria pueden afectar negativamente las carreras de las mujeres y los miembros de otras comunidades marginadas en arqueología y proponemos una serie de recomendaciones para abordar estos problemas dentro del campo. Además de una mayor reflexividad individual en torno a las decisiones de coautoría, alentamos el desarrollo de pautas claras sobre la adscripción de autores de organizaciones arqueológicas y medios editoriales y abogamos por la adopción de recuentos de publicaciones totales y fraccionadas como medidas de productividad individual por parte de las instituciones.

Keywords: author ascription; coauthorship; credit; gender homophily; publication

Palabras clave: adscripción del autor; coautoría; reconocimiento; homofilia de género; publicación

Although seemingly simple, authorship ascription is complex. Given that not everyone who creates written works is credited as an author—think, for example, of those who draft legal contracts or write owner’s

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manuals—Michel Foucault (1977:124) argued that “the function of an author is to characterize the existence, circulation, and operation of certain discourses within a society.” We thus need to consider which works are deemed worthy of authorship within social discourse. Additional complexities arise from academic authorship specifically. Unlike other creative compositions, academic texts require successful peer review for publication. Consequently, as Biagioli (2003) has argued, academic authors do not “have inherent rights in a scientific claim the way a ‘normal’ author has rights in the product of his or her personal expression.” For Biagioli (2003:254), scientific authorship is thus “not a right but a reward” and one “not bestowed by [a] specific nation (according to its law), but by an international community of peers (according to often tacit customs).” Such an understanding of academic authorship suggests the need to examine such customs and make them explicit. Doing so is especially critical given the importance of authorship metrics to academic advancement. As Smith and colleagues (2020:1995) succinctly explain, “Authorship is commonly used as the basis for the measurement of research productivity. It influences career progression and rewards, making it a valued commodity in a competitive scientific environment.”

The increasing number and kinds of research collaborations—including between researchers; graduate students; and members of local, Indigenous, and descendant communities—have further complicated understandings of academic authorship and raised questions about how best to recognize and reward it. Although scientific collaboration has been common for more than 400 years, the number of academic publications with multiple authors has increased dramatically in recent decades (Fell and König 2016:114). This increase is not surprising. Collaborations can bring together diverse voices and thereby improve scientific endeavors. As several have noted, a “science characterized by social homogeneity risks overlooking vital perspectives, leading to potential shortcomings in research outcomes” (Goyanes et al. 2025:2). Articles with multiple authors also provide tangible benefits to researchers. Multiauthored publications are, for example, more highly cited than single-authored publications (Gao et al. 2022:327; see also Fell and König 2016:114). Research teams are generally able to produce more publications (Wutchty et al. 2007), as well as publications with more data produced by individual team members (Cordero et al. 2016; Fontanarosa et al. 2017).

Despite the benefits of coauthorship teams, complexities also arise from increasing the numbers of coauthors, including how individuals should be credited (e.g., Broderick and Casadevall 2019; Moustafa 2016; Tscharnke et al. 2007). Women and members of other marginalized groups are less likely to be included as authors when part of research teams (Ross et al. 2022). This exclusion, even when unintentional, can affect junior women scholars’ decisions to stay in their field of study (Ross et al. 2022:141). As noted by Ouzman (2023:68), despite some existing guidelines—including those provided by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors and the Committee on Publication Ethics—we nevertheless “find ourselves in a complex field with often contradictory instructions and rules to be negotiated.”

For disciplines such as archaeology, which could alternatively or simultaneously fall into the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, assignment of coauthorship may prove to be particularly complex (e.g., Kawa 2022; Lyman 2025; Ouzman 2023). Certain contributors to archaeological knowledge, such as students, local workers, and in many instances wives of archaeologists, were and are regularly excluded from authorship lists (e.g., Heath-Stout 2024a:170; Mickel and Byrd 2021; Quinlan 2023; see also Leighton 2015, 2016; Mickel 2019, 2021). Further, knowledge extraction from originating and descendant communities with minimal acknowledgment persists in archaeology and was extremely common in past work (see Laluk et al. 2022).

Building on previous studies of authorship and identity in archaeology (e.g., Bardolph 2014; Heath-Stout 2020a; Tushingham et al. 2017), we consider how coauthorship intersects with gender in peer-reviewed journal articles with five or more authors. After examining 900 articles published in 11 archaeology journals between 2013 and 2024, we analyzed trends in the perceived gender of first authors, last authors, and coauthors. Although there are many possible authorship systems including simply alphabetical, first-author positions generally receive the most credit for a published piece, whereas last authors may serve as an honorary position of importance denoting mentorship or lab leadership. For the archaeology journals analyzed here, gendered trends were remarkably consistent for both first and

last authors, with men being more likely to hold both positions and to serve as a coauthor. Men in these positions were also far more likely to include higher proportions of men as coauthors.

Drawing on concepts of gender homophily—the “principle that contact between similar people occurs at a higher rate than among dissimilar people” (McPherson et al. 2001:416)—and friendship networks (Leighton 2020), we consider the ways in which intentional or unintentional exclusion from coauthored papers may negatively affect the careers of women in archaeology. Numerous studies have documented that women and archaeologists with other marginalized identities publish and apply for funding less often, receive fewer or lower-tier academic positions, face greater rates of harassment, are cited less often, and receive less recognition as experts in the discipline (e.g., Bardolph 2014; Goldstein et al. 2018; Heath-Stout 2020a, 2020b, 2024a, 2024b; Hodgetts et al. 2020; Horowitz and Brouwer Burg 2024; Hutson 2002, 2006; Hutson et al. 2025; Meyers et al. 2018; Pope and Teather 2025; Smith and Garrett-Scott 2021; Tushingham et al. 2017). Given these negative outcomes and the subsequent loss of diversity of thought in archaeological research, we make recommendations to begin to redress these issues with author ascription. Specifically, we advocate that archaeology societies create clear guidelines on authorship expectations and standards and that institutions adopt both total publication and fractional publication counts—that is, a paper with five authors results in 0.2 publication credit to each—as measures of individual productivity.

Coauthorship, Credit, and Intersectional Gender Identities

Conventionally, those studying multiauthored academic texts have used coauthorship as an index of research collaboration (e.g., Boschini and Sjögren 2007). But, as many have noted, such studies rely on two sometimes problematic assumptions: that all named authors contribute meaningfully to the research collaboration and that all who contribute meaningfully are named as authors (e.g., Kovacs 2017; Laudel 2002; Ponomariov and Boardman 2016). These assumptions can be but are not always true. In some cases, and across multiple disciplines, studies of academic authorship have identified problematic practices, including ghost authorship, honorary authorship, and overinclusive authorship (e.g., Kovacs 2017; Pruschak and Hopp 2022; Settles et al. 2018). In the first, “contributors are not listed as authors,” and in the second, “non-contributors are listed as authors” (Pruschak and Hopp 2022:1). In the third, scholars, often for moral reasons, “list individuals as authors who do not merit authorship . . . in the name of inclusion” (Settles et al. 2018:314). Although overinclusive authorship is based on ideals of inclusiveness and equity, honorary authorship is not. As Kovacs (2017:54) explains, a lead author might include as a coauthor someone who contributed little or nothing to the project or results “in the hope that this favour will be returned in the future.”

For these and other reasons, several have advocated studying coauthorship in numerous disciplines not as an index of intellectual or resource collaboration but as “a social phenomenon worthy of study in-and-of-itself” (Ponomariov and Boardman 2016:1940). Ponomariov and Boardman (2016:1940; see also Kovacs 2017) argue, “Though co-authorship may validly represent research collaboration . . . co-authorship may have numerous other meanings.” They thus suggest that coauthorship studies be reframed as studies of author ascription. Doing so allows such studies to consider factors other than collaboration, including the roles of friendship networks (e.g., Leighton 2020) and, often, gender-based homophily (e.g., Kwiek and Roszka 2021). Such a reframing thus allows scholars to question not only whether coauthorship occurs more often among those with similar or diverse identities but also how and why.

Given that academic authorship can be understood as a reward rather than a right, changing the focus of coauthorship studies from collaboration to authorship ascription also encourages reflection on the Matthew/Matilda effect. In the 1960s, Robert Merton (1968:58) observed what he termed a “complex pattern of the misallocation of credit for scientific work”: those with established reputations receive more credit than those without. Merton (1968:58) named this pattern the Matthew Effect after the Gospel According to Saint Matthew 13:12: “For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath” (see also Díaz-Andreu 2025). Twenty-five years later, Margaret Rossiter (1993:326) noted that the Matthew Effect had come to refer only to the first half of this verse—the over-recognition of already known



Figure 1. Illustration of the Matthew and Matilda effects. Drawing by Sasha Buckser.

individuals—but that the second half “has wide application among the . . . have-nots of scientific history, including especially women.” She therefore coined this lack of recognition the Matilda Effect, after a nineteenth-century American suffragist, Matilda Joselyn Gage (Figure 1). These names are particularly fitting. Although Matthew ultimately received credit for the gospel bearing his name, he did not write it, whereas Matilda Joselyn Gage, despite her numerous achievements, remains virtually unknown (Rossiter 1993:326, 335–337). Since the publication of Rossiter’s seminal article, several have considered whether and how “power dynamics related to social status (e.g., gender) may determine one’s authorship opportunities and authorship credit” (Settles et al. 2018:304).

Previous Studies of Coauthorship

Existing studies of coauthorship across numerous disciplines, subjects, and nationalities do not reveal obvious patterns or trends in gendered authorship and are often difficult to compare. This lack of consistency reflects a wide range of theoretical and methodological approaches, as well as different demographic histories within disciplines and countries around the world. As a result, the relative

representation of women within each field of study varies drastically, shifting expectations for parity (e.g., Bravo-Hermsdorff et al. 2019).

Scholars in some disciplines, including criminal justice (Eigenberg and Whalley 2015), suggest men are more likely to lead coauthored publications. Studies in other disciplines, such as psychology (Fell and König 2016), instead suggest that women coauthor more often. And still other studies, including one focused on economics, social sciences, and humanities in Italy, did not identify significant gendered differences in coauthorship practices (Gërxhani et al. 2023). Rates of participation in multiauthored publications may also be misleading. A study in digital humanities found that, although women do not coauthor at the same rate as men, when they do, they occupy central bridging roles in authorship networks (Gao et al. 2022).

Those studying multiauthored publications have sought to understand not only who coauthors but also who coauthors with whom, and specifically the role of gender homophily in authorship ascription (e.g., Jadidi et al. 2018; Sjögren 2007). Women in organization science, for example, prefer coauthoring with other women (Karimi et al. 2018), whereas men in ecology and evolutionary biology tend to coauthor with other men (Frances et al. 2020). In a broad study of more than 250,000 academics, Araújo and colleagues (2017) found that men were more likely to collaborate with other men, whereas women worked with both men and women to degrees at parity for their disciplines, whereas Kwiek and Roszka (2021) noted that Polish university professors, regardless of gender, coauthor more often with men. In some disciplines, including public administration (Smith et al. 2024) and critical care (Vranas et al. 2020), women lead authors are more likely than men lead authors to include other women as coauthors. In an expansive study of nearly 3,000 papers published between 1995 and 2017 with two or more authors credited as contributing equally (co-lead), mixed men-women pairs were the most common, although men in these positions were more likely to be named first and other patterns such as alphabetical listing could not explain this trend (Broderick and Casadevall 2019). Notably, papers coauthored or co-led by only men outnumber those by only women in several fields (e.g., Broderick and Casadevall 2019; Smith et al. 2024; Williams et al. 2018).

Some have gone beyond documenting who coauthors and with whom to consider different reasons for and consequences of coauthorship. Schmal and colleagues (2023:1), for example, noted a tendency for women “to contribute more to the public good of open sciences [through open access journals], while their male colleagues focus on private reputation [through high-impact journals].” In economics, women have more insular (repeat) coauthorship relationships (Ductor et al. 2023) and are more likely to collaborate with peers who are less productive than themselves (Ghosh and Liu 2020) and with students (Hussey et al. 2020). Compounding gendered approaches to coauthorship, Gërxhani and colleagues (2023) noted a tendency for highly collaborative Italian women to be evaluated more negatively than equally qualified male peers. Put differently, women receive less credit or career benefits for coauthored publications and may prioritize credit less than men. But how does authorship ascription intersect with gender in the discipline of archaeology?

Studies of Authorship in Archaeology

Although studies examining authorship in archaeology are well established, authorship ascription in multiauthored publications has received comparatively little attention. Further complicating the picture, available baseline data on gender in archaeology are sporadic and present differing pictures of the field based on country, region, type of employment, and stage of career (e.g., Aitchison et al. 2021; Heath-Stout 2020a; Lazar et al. 2014). As such, it is difficult to make extrapolations about the relative proportions of men and women in the discipline. Most measures suggest that women make up an increasing proportion of the field, but exact data range from 40% to 65% of the discipline in the United States and Europe (e.g., Aitchison et al. 2021; Cramb et al. 2022; Hutson et al. 2025; Meyers et al. 2018; Speakman et al. 2018; VanDerwarker et al. 2018). This is further complicated by the fact that women are less likely to end up in academic positions with PhD programs that highly value research output, incentivize publications, and provide the time and support required to publish frequently (e.g., Hutson et al. 2025).

Most studies of gendered authorship have focused on the identity of first authors because of their perceived responsibility for the work (e.g., Bardolph 2014; Bardolph and Vanderwarker 2016). Where

coauthors are considered, they are most often analyzed en masse to understand the identities of authors and publishing trends more broadly (e.g., Hanscam and Witcher 2023; Heath-Stout 2020a; Tushingham et al. 2017). Although the composition of authors on individual papers has yet to be explored, studies on authorship and gender in archaeology provide a crucial framework for this study.

Since the 1980s, researchers have largely found women to be underrepresented across archaeology journals, topics, and regions (e.g., Bardolph 2014; Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2004; Heath-Stout 2020a; Gero 1985; Victor and Beaudry 1992). In an extensive study of 11 journals published between 1990 and 2013, Bardolph (2014:534) found women were consistently published as lead authors at much lower rates than men and noted a “pernicious historical bias with regards to the visibility, recognition, and circulation of women’s writing.” Similarly, Heath-Stout (2020b) identified a problematic publication pattern for the *Journal of Field Archaeology*, in which men first-authored 72% of the articles published between 1974 and 2018. Similarly, in a study of publications between 2015 and 2020 in *Antiquity*, Hanscam and Witcher (2023) found men published at twice the rate of women serving as solo, first, or coauthors, although there was some improvement through time. Interestingly, the authors also conducted geographic analyses and noted clear distinctions among countries: authors from Denmark and Russia were more likely to be women, whereas other countries and regions varied, with ratios ranging from 0.89 to a low of 0.15 for women:men authors (Hanscam and Witcher 2023:92–93).

Those focusing on publications in specific regions of the United States found similar patterns of underrepresentation of women compared to their membership in regional societies, although there was geographic variability (e.g., Bardolph 2018; Bardolph and Vanderwarker 2016; Classen et al. 1999). Such studies largely focused on journal publications, but an analysis of edited volumes in the Southeast by Bardolph and Vanderwarker (2016:180) identified an important pattern: women were more likely to be the first author of a chapter if a woman served as volume editor. Additional studies suggested that women were better represented as authors in non-peer-reviewed publications, although they were still underrepresented compared to their overall participation in the discipline (e.g., Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2004; Fulkerson and Tushingham 2019; Tushingham et al. 2017).

Within anthropology more broadly, Smith and Garrett-Scott (2021) found that Black women are not cited at a rate consistent with their scholarly output, especially by non-Black authors and in top-tier journals. Despite increasing calls to reconsider how we practice archaeology to be deliberately antiracist, anticolonial, feminist, and Indigenous (e.g., Agbe-Davies 2022; Brodtkin et al. 2011; Flewellen et al. 2021; Fong et al. 2022; Franklin 2001; Franklin et al. 2020; Laluk et al. 2022; Nicholas and Watkins 2024; Van Alst and Shield Chief Gover 2024), explicit studies on intersectional identities in archaeological research and publications are rare. Recently, Heath-Stout (2020a, 2024b; Heath-Stout et al. 2023) used surveys and interviews to better understand how individuals’ identities and backgrounds may affect publication practices and thus knowledge production in archaeology. Using a survey of authors published in 21 archaeology journals between 2007 and 2016, Heath-Stout (2020a) found that gender continues to play a significant role in authorship, with women underrepresented in all but one journal, *Archaeologies*. Within this data, Heath-Stout (2020a) notes improvement over time, although the most prestigious journals (see Beck et al. [2021] for a consideration of prestige) remain the most dominated by straight, white, cisgender men. She argues that “archaeological knowledge production is slowly approaching gender parity”; however, she remains concerned with the lack of diversity of authorship noting that “singly marginalized people . . . have had more success than their multiply marginalized peers” (Heath-Stout 2020a:420).

Even though disparities in authorship ascription are clear, the reasons for such differences are less straightforward. Editors have consistently found that men submit more articles than do women (Heath-Stout 2020b; Rautman 2012; see also Bardolph and Vanderwarker 2016:184–185; Hanscam and Witcher 2023). Such a disparity in submission rates may be related to systemic issues of who is employed in academic positions that are likely to reward publications, increased time constraints placed on women both within and outside employment, and women’s potential lack of confidence and poor mentorship (e.g., Bardolph 2014; Bardolph and Vanderwarker 2016; Fulkerson and Tushingham 2019; Rautman 2012; Sonnet 1995; Tushingham et al. 2017). A “chilly climate” for women in archaeology, including microaggressions and “paternalistic prejudice,” is viewed as a key barrier for women in publishing and

attaining academic positions (e.g., Baxter 2005:8–9; Fulkerson and Tushingham 2019:389–390; Geller 2016:162; Overholtzer and Jalbert 2021; Wylie 1994:67–69).

Methodology

Building on these studies within and beyond archaeology, we examined the gender composition of coauthor groups on individual articles to understand credit and prestige in archaeology publications. Given the frequent focus on the number of publications and the documented heightened expectations in terms of quantity in academia (Cramb et al. 2022), our goal was to understand how inclusion in publications with a large number of authors may provide disparate opportunities for some scholars. We analyzed articles with large coauthorship groups published between 2013 and 2024 and selected five authors as the threshold for inclusion. In a recent study, Lyman (2025) documented a significant increase from an average of 1.2 authors per article in 1940 to 3.26 authors per article in 2023. His findings support using five authors as a threshold, because ranges for the mean number of authors per article between 2010 and 2023 extend to more than four authors (2025:Figure 1). Using five authors as the threshold thus ensures that we are capturing teams within the timeframe that are larger than normal for the discipline.

We included 11 journals in the analysis to capture regional (*Kiva*, *Mexicon*, *Plains Anthropologist*, and *Southeastern Archaeology*), Society for American Archaeology (SAA; *American Antiquity*, *Advances in Archaeological Practice*, and *Latin American Antiquity*), and international (*Antiquity*, *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*, *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, and *Journal of Social Archaeology*) publication outlets. There was a bias in journal selection toward the Americas, specifically North America and Mesoamerica, which was designed to align with a consideration of SAA journals, given their inclusion in substantial previous research on authorship (e.g., Bardolph 2014, 2018; Heath-Stout 2020a), the SAA being the publication venue for this article, and the publishing experience and regional expertise of the authors. *Antiquity*, which included the largest number of articles by a substantial margin, was selected specifically to ensure that a more international picture could be included in the results.

We acknowledge the limitations to the selection and grouping of these journals and that several notable journals were not included in the analysis. Although SAA journals are an easily classified group, regional journals operate at different scales and with often discrete subsets of archaeologists. The demographics of these subsets of archaeological research vary in terms of diversity of identity. Additionally, the journals grouped under the label “international” vary substantially in their publication focus, rates of publication, and frequency of publishing papers with five or more authors. Although these groupings provide a convenient shorthand for discussion and simplification of many of the figures, we also include individualized data for journals in both tables and figures and discuss the distinctions within these categories throughout the data section to capture individualized variability. Future research would benefit from expansion of the journals included in an analysis and additional consideration of the ways in which topic, country of origin, and journal scope intersect with author ascription behaviors.

For recording purposes, we assigned each publication a unique identifier, and all authors were recorded with the perceived gender of the first and last authors delineated. Although archaeology typically uses the lead author to signify the point of prestige, the last author is commonly used to signify the leader of a lab group or team in the natural sciences and thus is also considered. Following Bardolph (2014), we used a combination of first name, personal familiarity with authors, and online searches to assess perceived gender. As discussed by Heath-Stout (2020a:409–411), assigning gender identity to authors based on their first name is inherently flawed, especially for authors without large web presences or whose web presences were difficult to access as English speakers in the United States (e.g., Bardolph 2014:526, Fulkerson and Tushingham 2019:385; Heath-Stout 2020a:410–411); this practice undoubtedly led to the misgendering of several individuals. The scope of the data collected, including 900 papers and 6,730 individual authors, helps mitigate these issues. In addition, studies of gender in archaeology have yielded useful data and meaningful results illustrating gender-based differences in the field (e.g., Hutson et al. 2023:330).

We recognize the need for an explicitly intersectional and Black Feminist approach—one that considers the convergence of multiple forms of identity and oppression, including those related to race,

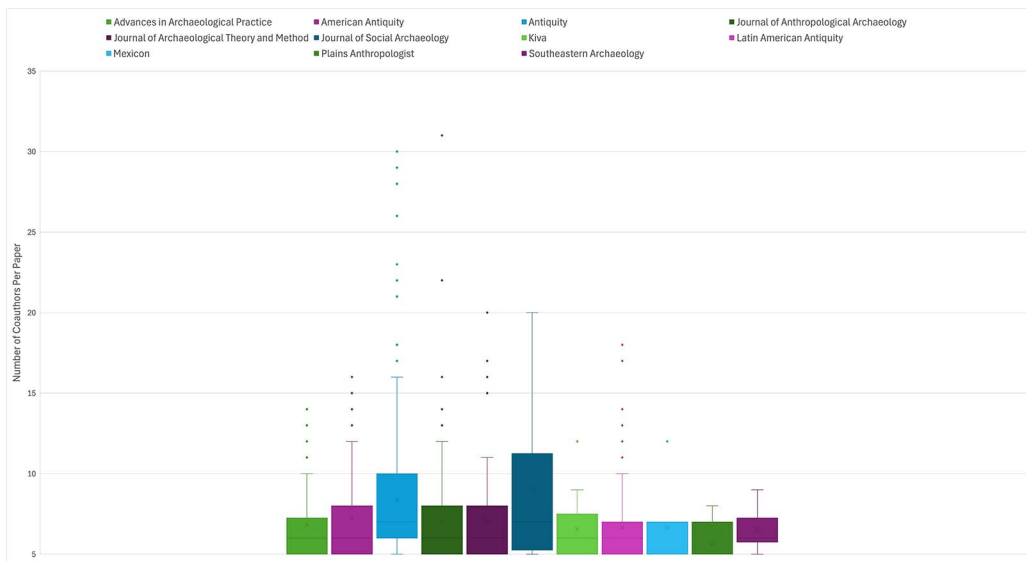


Figure 2. Box and whisker plot of the number of coauthors per article by journal.

class, sexual orientation, nationality, and many others (e.g., Crenshaw 1989; Franklin 2001; Grahn 2011; Heath-South 2020a, 2024b, 2024a; Spencer-Wood and Trunzo 2022; Sterling 2015). Unfortunately, analyses such as the one we undertook are necessarily limited by the data made publicly available for articles. Because publications rarely include information about authors beyond their names, institutional affiliations, emails, and postal addresses, studies of the power dynamics of authorship ascription seldom include factors such as race and ethnicity, despite their critical importance. Heath-Stout's (2020a, 2024a) recent work suggests that intersectional identities undoubtedly affect authorship ascription.

Unfortunately, we were unable to include information about the intersectional identities of the authors. Further, although we recognize that gender is nonbinary and extends to include identities beyond man and woman, queer authors were rarely identified in this study due to a combination of methodological limitations and, we suspect, current political shifts that have made it more risky to reveal these identities publicly on web pages. Queer archaeologists bring an important perspective to the field (see Heath-Stout 2020a, 2024a), and we regret not being better situated to capture their experiences in coauthorship. As noted by Heath-Stout (2020a, 2024a), archaeology's moves toward greater inclusivity tend to privilege straight, cisgender, white women (see also Sterling 2024). Results from this study will be contextualized with this information in mind, even though the lack of survey results prevents discussion of queer and intersectional identities directly.

Data Analysis

In total, we analyzed authorship on 900 articles. Individual papers contained between five and a maximum of 31 authors each, with most (66%) having between five and seven authors. Individual journals had similar distributions, although only *Antiquity* and *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* included papers with more than 20 authors (Figure 2). *Antiquity* and *Journal of Social Archaeology* stand out for a slightly higher median number of authors. Further, data suggest that the number of coauthors is increasing over time, as was recently noted by Lyman (2025), with the average number of individual authors increasing from 6.62 in 2013 to 8.5 in 2024. Importantly, the number of archaeological publications written by large teams has increased substantially between 2013 and 2024, with the total per year almost doubling from 2015 to 2016 and climbing again starting in 2019 (Table 1). This increase over time and relative similarity across journal venues suggest that understanding authorship ascription on coauthored papers will only grow in importance.

Table 1. Counts and Percentages of the Gender of Lead and Last Authors by Journal and Year.

	Lead Author Gender						Last Author Gender						Total Papers
	Women		Men		Indeterminate		Women		Men		Indeterminate		
	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	
Journal													
<i>Advances in Archaeological Practice</i>	30	48	32	52	0	0	26	42	36	58	0	0	62
<i>American Antiquity</i>	30	42	42	58	0	0	26	36	46	64	0	0	72
<i>Antiquity</i>	120	36	210	63	6	2	92	27	238	71	6	2	336
<i>Journal of Anthropological Archaeology</i>	69	41	98	59	0	0	59	35	105	63	3	2	167
<i>Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory</i>	37	39	59	61	0	0	28	29	67	70	1	1	96
<i>Journal of Social Archaeology</i>	6	50	6	50	0	0	2	17	10	83	0	0	12
<i>Kiva</i>	2	14	12	86	0	0	3	21	11	79	0	0	14
<i>Latin American Antiquity</i>	44	42	61	58	0	0	45	43	59	56	1	1	105
<i>Mexicon</i>	2	18	9	82	0	0	4	36	7	64	0	0	11
<i>Plains Anthropologist</i>	0	0	11	100	0	0	0	0	10	91	1	9	11
<i>Southeastern Archaeology</i>	4	29	10	71	0	0	5	36	9	64	0	0	14
Year													
2013	16	43	21	57	0	0	7	23	30	81	0	0	37
2014	8	17	39	81	1	2	18	38	29	60	1	2	48

(Continued)

Table 1. Counts and Percentages of the Gender of Lead and Last Authors by Journal and Year. (*Continued.*)

	Lead Author Gender						Last Author Gender						Total Papers
	Women		Men		Indeterminate		Women		Men		Indeterminate		
	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	
2015	15	37	25	61	1	2	12	29	27	66	2	5	41
2016	27	35	49	64	1	1	24	32	53	69	0	0	77
2017	25	35	46	65	0	0	22	31	48	68	1	1	71
2018	27	36	47	64	0	0	24	32	48	65	2	3	74
2019	33	36	59	64	0	0	31	34	61	66	0	0	92
2020	30	37	52	63	0	0	23	28	58	71	1	1	82
2021	42	42	55	56	2	2	40	40	55	56	4	4	99
2022	48	53	42	47	0	0	35	39	55	61	0	0	90
2023	34	36	61	64	0	0	25	26	69	60	1	1	95
2024	39	41	54	57	1	1	29	31	65	59	0	0	94
Total	344	38	550	61	6	1	290	32	598	66	12	1	900

Note: Total papers refer to the total articles with five or more authors recorded for each journal. Because each article has both a lead and last author, this column is half the sum of the entire row.

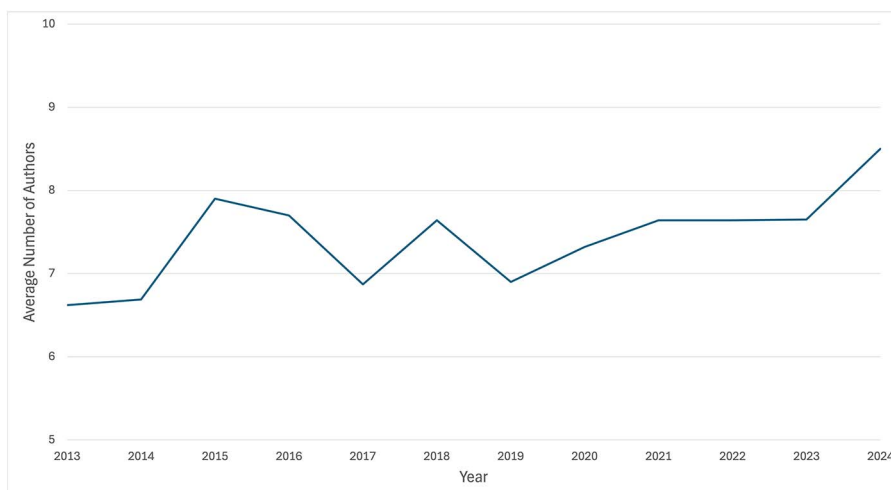


Figure 3. Average number of authors per article through time.

In total, 6,741 authors were recorded, with 38% identified as women and 59% identified as men. Three percent of the authors ($n = 208$) could not be assigned a gender or were identified as queer: given the low number of queer-identified authors, they were grouped with indeterminate-gender authors to ensure their anonymity. Publications with indeterminate authors—111 of the 900 articles—were excluded from detailed analyses of demographic composition but were included when first or last author gender was identifiable. More than half ($n = 60$) of these articles were published in *Antiquity*, whose large sample size ($n = 336$) suggests their exclusion should not skew the data substantially. Only six articles, all from *Antiquity*, had first authors whose gender could not be assigned, whereas 12 articles had indeterminate final authors, largely from *Antiquity* and *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*.

It is important to note that nonbinary, transgender, and other non-cisgender archaeologists are publishing and are certainly part of these groups. Vanderwaker and colleagues (2018:Table 1) found that roughly 1% of their survey participants identified as transgender. Similarly, Heath-Stout (2020a:Table 4) and Aitchison and colleagues (2021:Table 2.4.1) found that less than 1% of their survey sample of authors in major journals identified as non-cisgender. We could tentatively extrapolate to suggest that slightly less than 70 queer authors are missing within the study data. However, given what is known about the impacts of intersectional identities on academics, we wonder whether these authors are represented at the rates that they should be in coauthored articles. Further survey data would be required to assess whether inclusion in large coauthorship groups matches expectations for queer authors.

Within the years examined, individual journals contained between 11 (*Mexicon* and *Plains Anthropologist*) and 336 (*Antiquity*) articles with five or more authors (Table 1). Of these large coauthored articles, women led 38% ($n = 344$), whereas men led 61% ($n = 550$). Percentages of women as lead authors ranged by journal from a low of 0% (*Plains Anthropologist*) to a high of 50% (*Journal of Social Archaeology*). When considered based on the type of journals (regional, SAA, and international), a few trends appeared (Figure 4). Although the sample sizes are low, the regional journals included lower rates of women leading large coauthorship studies as first authors (Figure 4a) or serving as last authors (Figure 4b). Although this could suggest that the lack of gender parity is exacerbated in North America and Mesoamerica, international publications are shown to be less equitable than those led by the SAA, which averages more than 40% women in both lead and last author positions. Although the nearly equitable (48%) rate of women lead authors in *Advances in Archaeological Practice* certainly bolsters the numbers from the SAA journals slightly (Table 1), the journal does not stand out from the others in terms of last author gender. International journals, with the largest sample size at more than 600 articles, sit between the other groups in terms of inclusion of women in lead and last author positions. One important note about the grouping of these four journals is that the *Journal of Social Archaeology*

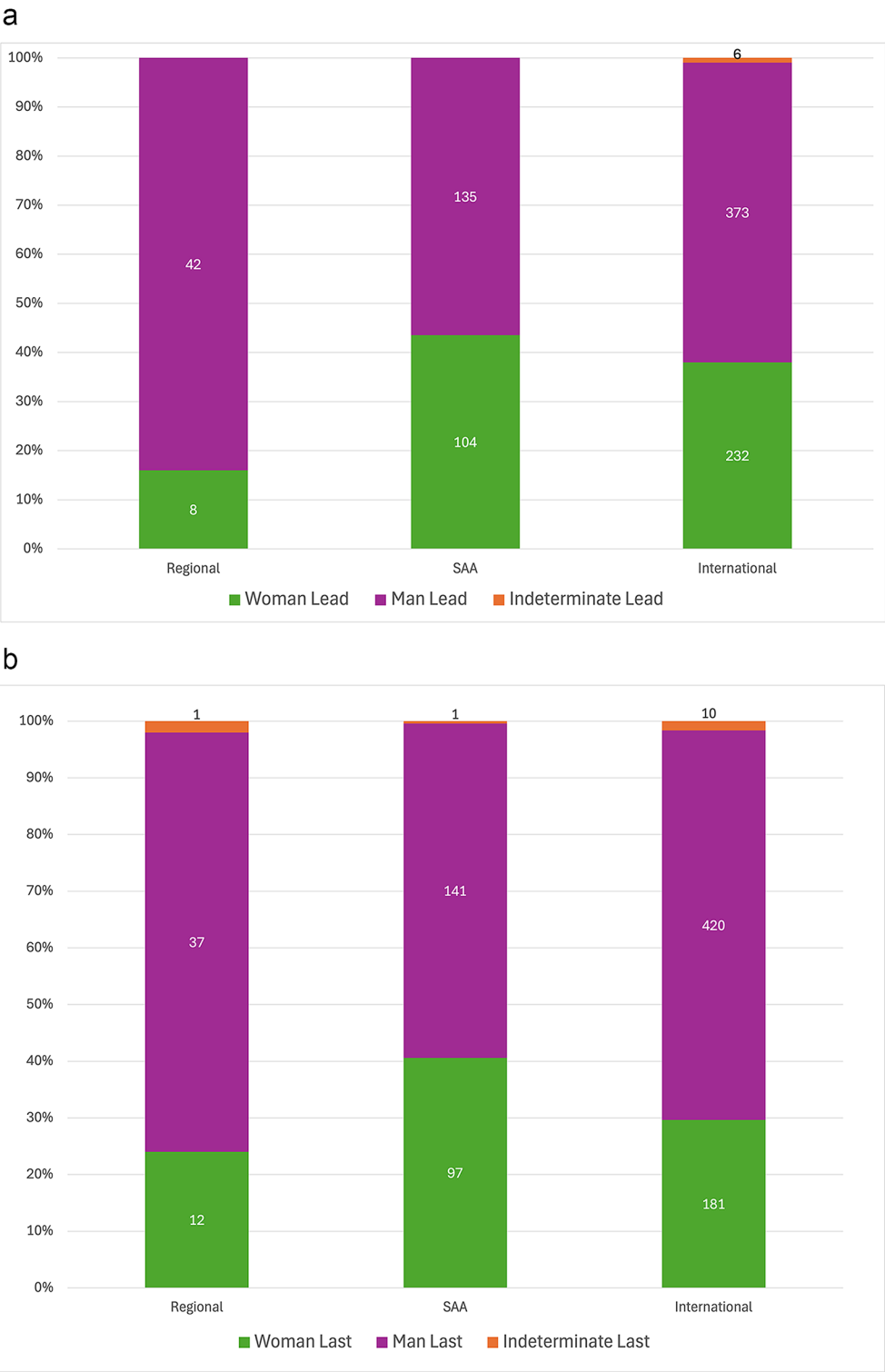


Figure 4. Proportions of men and women as lead (a) and last (b) authors by journal type.

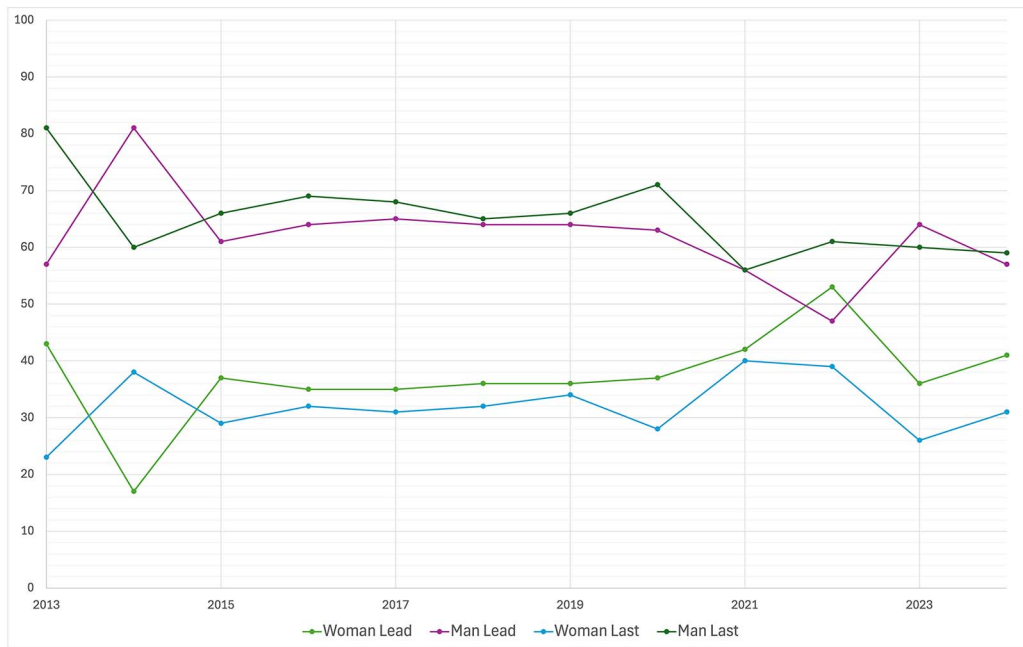


Figure 5. Proportions of men and women as lead and last authors through time.

is drowned out by the sample sizes from the others. However, although this journal is the only one to reach parity for first-author gender, it contains the lowest rate of women as last authors at 17% (Table 1).

When considered through time, women first authored between 17% (2014) and 53% (2022) of the articles (Table 1; Figure 5). Most years, women led 35% to 43% of large, coauthored pieces with no clear temporal trend of improvement. Importantly, 2022 is the only year where women exceeded men as first authors. In terms of last authorship, women were found in this position on publications between 23% (7/37 in 2013) and 40% (40/99 in 2021) of the time (Figure 5). Again, no clear improvement through time is evident, although the lowest rates are found in the earliest year recorded. Notably, because last authorship can denote an honorary position signifying mentorship, articles with women as lead authors and men as last author may signify the increasing number of women archaeology students in the field. However, there also appears to be an increase in women as last authors and men as lead authors in 2014. Although they are not identical, the correlating trends for gender of lead and last authors suggest a relationship between these variables and gendered patterns in archaeology.

A key variable in understanding large coauthorship teams is the differential participation of men and women. Specifically, we questioned how the gender of lead and last authors influenced the gender of the included coauthors (Table 2). Again, the lead and last author data demonstrate remarkable correlation. Women lead and last authors coauthor with relatively equal proportions of men (47%) and women (51%). Alternatively, men lead and last authors coauthor with far more men (65%–66%) than women (31%–32%). Different journals demonstrate slightly different trends of coauthorship based on gender; however, the trend of women lead and last authors including a higher percentage of women as coauthors than men lead and last authors is consistent across all journals (Table 2). When different types of journals are considered, regional venues stand out as the most extreme, suggesting the strongest operation of gender homophily (Figure 6). For both SAA and international outlets, women lead and last authors demonstrate a slight preference for coauthoring with women but fall close to parity with their research teams, whereas men lead and last authors show much stronger preferences for men as coauthors.

Temporally, there has been a very slight improvement for both men and women lead and last authors in the inclusion of women as coauthors through time (Figure 7). In 2014, women lead and last authors included fewer women as coauthors than expected, whereas women last authors and men lead and last

Table 2. Coauthor Gender of Papers Based on the Gender of the Lead and Last Authors.

	Woman Coauthor		Man Coauthor		Indet. Coauthor		Total	Woman Coauthor		Man Coauthor		Indet. Coauthor		Total*
	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =
Lead Author	Woman Lead Author							Man Lead Author						
<i>Advances in Archaeological Practice</i>	125	62	74	36	4	2	203	70	32	144	65	7	3	221
<i>American Antiquity</i>	107	51	100	48	2	1	209	93	30	215	69	5	2	313
<i>Antiquity</i>	426	47	447	50	30	3	903	573	31	1,211	65	74	4	1,858
<i>Journal of Anthropological Archaeology</i>	236	49	233	48	12	3	481	220	32	459	66	16	2	695
<i>Journal of Archaeological Theory and Method</i>	140	54	120	46	1	0	261	113	27	294	70	11	3	418
<i>Journal of Social Archaeology</i>	28	47	32	53	0	0	60	17	35	31	63	1	2	49
<i>Kiva</i>	10	83	2	17	0	0	12	21	26	57	71	2	3	80
<i>Latin American Antiquity</i>	144	51	132	47	5	2	281	146	35	268	64	2	1	416
<i>Mexicon</i>	5	50	5	50	0	0	10	23	37	39	62	1	2	63
<i>Plains Anthropologist</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	16	26	45	73	1	2	62
<i>Southeastern Archaeology</i>	15	65	7	30	1	4	23	21	31	46	68	1	1	68
Total	1,236	51	1,152	47	55	2	2,443	1,313	31	2,809	66	121	3	4,243

(Continued)

Table 2. Coauthor Gender of Papers Based on the Gender of the Lead and Last Authors. (*Continued.*)

	Woman Coauthor		Man Coauthor		Indet. Coauthor		Total	Woman Coauthor			Man Coauthor		Indet. Coauthor		Total*
	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	<i>n</i> =	%		<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =
Last Author	Woman Last Author							Man Last Author							
<i>Advances in Archaeological Practice</i>	94	56	72	43	1	1	167	101	39		146	57	10	4	257
<i>American Antiquity</i>	97	50	94	48	4	2	195	103	31		221	68	3	1	327
<i>Antiquity</i>	358	49	350	47	29	4	737	634	31		1,301	64	87	4	2,022
<i>Journal of Anthropological Archaeology</i>	211	51	200	48	5	1	416	239	32		487	66	15	2	741
<i>Journal of Archaeological Theory and Method</i>	97	54	80	44	4	2	181	155	32		330	67	6	1	491
<i>Journal of Social Archaeology</i>	11	65	6	35	0	0	17	34	37		57	62	1	1	92
<i>Kiva</i>	12	67	5	28	1	6	18	19	26		54	73	1	1	74
<i>Latin American Antiquity</i>	146	48	156	52	0	0	302	142	36		242	62	6	2	390
<i>Mexicon</i>	16	57	12	43	0	0	28	12	27		32	71	1	2	45
<i>Plains Anthropologist</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	13	23		44	77	0	0	57
<i>Southeastern Archaeology</i>	16	55	13	45	0	0	29	20	32		40	65	2	3	62
Total	1,058	51	988	47	44	2	2,090	1,472	32		2,954	65	132	3	4,558

Note: Indeterminate lead and last authors were not considered for this portion of the study, but articles were included if either a lead or last author gender was known in the appropriate category.

*Totals vary for all categories due to the different combinations of women and men lead and last authors on each paper.

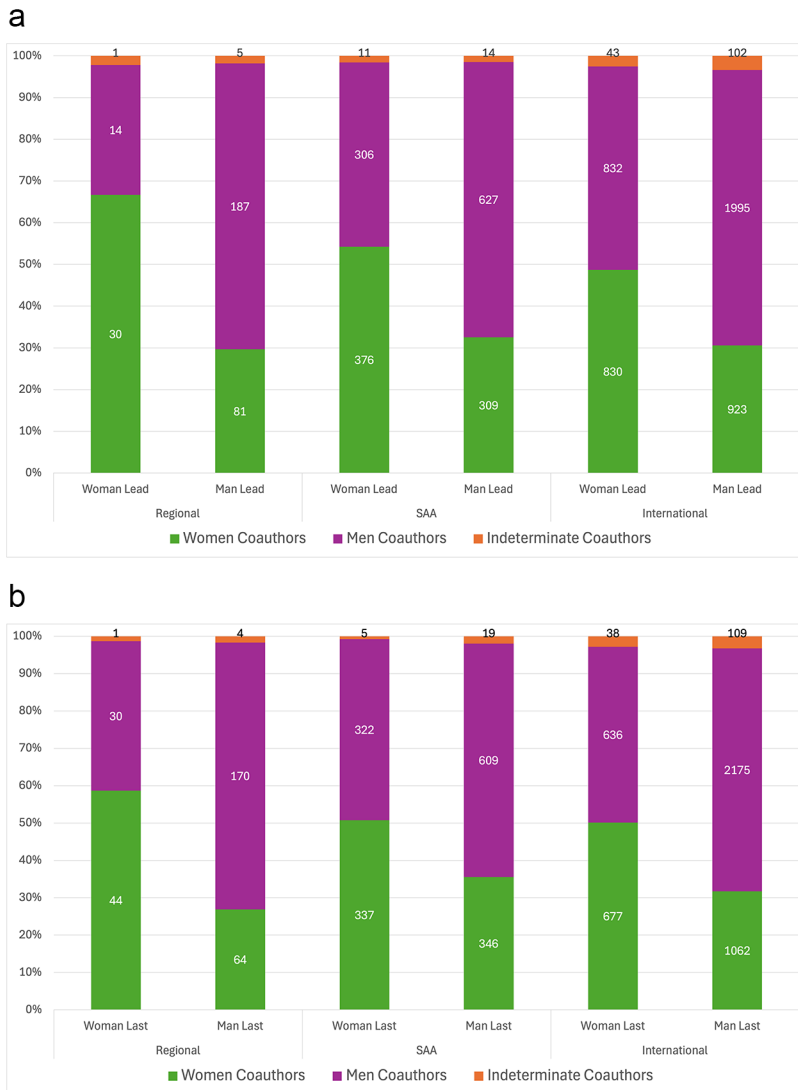


Figure 6. Proportions of men and women coauthors based on gender of the lead (a) and last (b) author by journal type.

authors all included higher proportions of women as coauthors in 2018. When broken down by journal type, it becomes clear that international journals are largely responsible for the variations in 2014 and 2018 (Figure 8). A further dip is noted among women lead authors' inclusion of women coauthors for SAA journals in 2020 (Figure 8a). Except for these years, the international and SAA journals appear relatively similar in their rates of inclusion of women coauthors. Again, regional journals stand out as the most extreme for gender homophily.

Also notable is the composition of groups on individual papers. We grouped papers into five categories based on the percentage of women coauthors per publication (Table 3). Because we used a minimum authorship count of five, we chose to use five rather than four groups, with each representing 20% of the authors being women; this division also allowed for a relative parity category for papers with between 41% and 60% women authorship. As shown in Table 3 and Figure 9, the vast majority of coauthored papers have 60% or fewer women. Notably, papers with men as first authors tend to peak in number at the 21%–40% women coauthor range, whereas those with men as first authors tend to peak in number at the 41%–60% women coauthor range. Whereas papers with women as lead

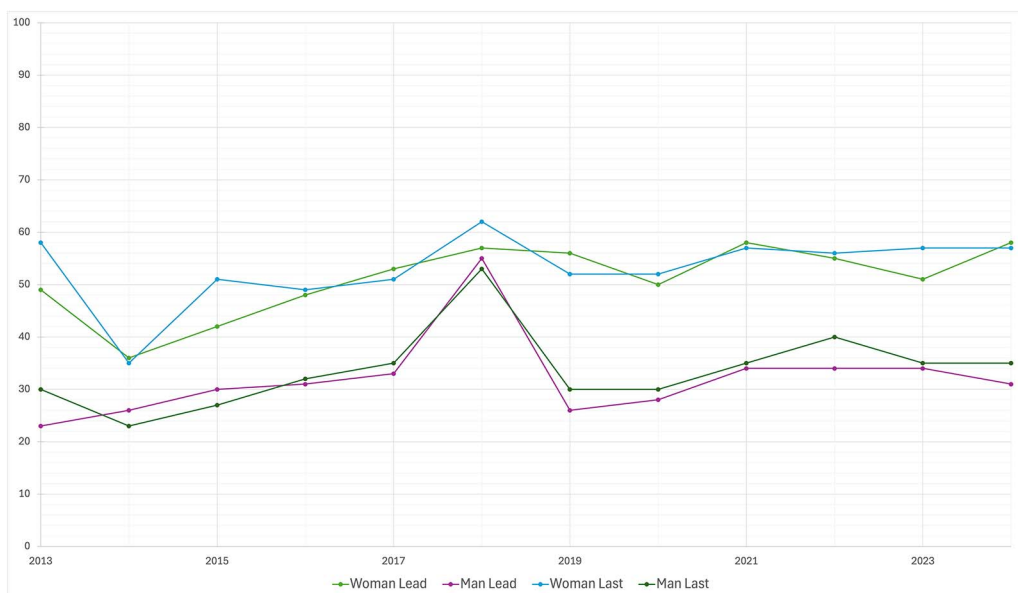


Figure 7. Percentage of women coauthors based on gender of the lead and last authors through time.

authors often consist of large proportions of coauthors who are men, high rates of women coauthors are almost nonexistent for papers led by men, with the only example being a single paper from the *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*.

The patterns found based on last author gender are generally consistent but slightly less extreme than the gendered divisions identified with first authors. When considered by journal type, the patterns remain consistent, with regional journals showing the most extreme patterns of gender homophily again (Figure 10). However, as shown in Table 3, there is substantial variation among the individual journals within this category. *Kiva* and *Southeastern Archaeology*, for instance, demonstrate greater gender homophily among women than *Mexicon*.

Ultimately, the very low number of papers with women as first authors complicates interpretations. Notably, men are responsible for more papers in the parity category of coauthorship than women for regional journals, perhaps suggesting these papers may provide an avenue for publishing in regional journals for women. Among SAA journals, *Advances in Archaeological Practice* again stands out for the tendency for women lead authors to work with higher proportions of women. International journals generally follow the established trends. Papers led by men are most likely to contain 20% or fewer women as coauthors for both *Antiquity* and *Journal of Archaeological Theory and Method*, whereas the small sample size of *Journal of Social Archaeology* again makes trends difficult to assess.

Finally, we considered all men and all women coauthorship teams, which arguably indicate the strongest forms of gender homophily. In total, men are responsible for 81% ($n = 66$) of these papers. When considered across journal types, regional journals again appear as the most prominent space for all-men teams, whereas SAA and International journals are more similar to one another (Figure 11). However, all types of journals demonstrate that all-men teams are more common than all-women teams, mirroring research in other disciplines (e.g., Smith et al. 2024; Williams et al. 2018).

Discussion

Our study thus suggests that, on peer-reviewed archaeology journal publications with five or more authors, men are more likely than women to be in leadership positions, whether denoted by lead or last authorship position. Although the rates of women as lead authors largely mirror or show slight improvements over previous studies (summarized in Heath-Stout 2020a:Table 3), earlier studies rarely



Figure 8. Percentage of women coauthors by gender of the lead (a) and last (b) authors and journal type.

Table 3. Gender Composition of Papers Based on the Gender of the Lead and Last Authors.

		0%–20% Women Coauthors		21%–40% Women Coauthors		41%–60% Women Coauthors		61%–80% Women Coauthors		81%–100% Women Coauthors		Papers with Indet. Coauthors		Total
		<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =
Lead Authors	Gender													
<i>Advances in Archaeological Practice</i>	Woman	2	7	4	13	7	23	8	27	5	17	4	13	30
	Man	10	31	13	41	4	13	2	6	0	0	3	9	32
<i>American Antiquity</i>	Woman	2	7	8	27	11	37	5	17	2	7	2	7	30
	Man	18	43	10	24	7	17	3	8	0	0	4	10	42
<i>Antiquity</i>	Woman	8	6	29	23	46	37	10	8	8	6	25	20	126
	Man	66	31	56	27	41	20	10	5	0	0	37	12	210
<i>Journal of Anthropological Archaeology</i>	Woman	7	10	14	20	22	32	14	20	3	4	9	13	69
	Man	33	34	35	36	21	21	2	2	0	0	7	7	98
<i>Journal of Archaeological Theory and Method</i>	Woman	1	3	7	19	19	51	6	16	3	8	1	3	37
	Man	22	37	20	34	5	8	1	2	1	2	10	17	59
<i>Journal of Social Archaeology</i>	Woman	1	17	1	17	2	33	0	0	2	33	0	0	6
	Man	1	17	2	33	2	33	0	0	0	0	1	17	6
<i>Kiva</i>	Woman	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	50	1	50	0	0	2
	Man	6	50	0	0	4	33	0	0	0	0	2	17	12
<i>Latin American Antiquity</i>	Woman	2	5	12	27	19	43	6	14	3	7	2	5	44
	Man	18	30	25	41	14	23	2	3	0	0	2	3	61
<i>Mexicon</i>	Woman	0	0	1	50	1	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Man	3	33	3	33	1	11	1	11	0	0	1	11	9
<i>Plains Anthropologist</i>	Woman	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Man	5	45	3	27	2	18	0	0	0	0	1	9	11
<i>Southeastern Archaeology</i>	Woman	0	0	0	0	1	25	1	25	1	25	1	25	4
	Man	3	30	2	20	4	40	0	0	0	0	1	10	10
Total		208	23	245	27	233	26	72	8	29	3	113	13	900

(Continued)

Table 3. Gender Composition of Papers Based on the Gender of the Lead and Last Authors. (*Continued.*)

		0%–20% Women Coauthors		21%–40% Women Coauthors		41%–60% Women Coauthors		61%–80% Women Coauthors		81%–100% Women Coauthors		Papers with Indet. Coauthors		Total
		<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =	%	<i>n</i> =
Last Authors	Gender													
<i>Advances in Archaeological Practice</i>	Woman	2	8	7	27	7	27	5	19	4	15	1	4	26
	Man	10	28	10	28	4	11	5	14	1	3	6	17	36
<i>American Antiquity</i>	Woman	3	12	5	19	7	27	7	27	1	4	3	12	26
	Man	17	37	13	28	11	24	1	2	1	2	3	7	46
<i>Antiquity</i>	Woman	5	5	21	21	31	32	13	13	8	8	20	20	98
	Man	69	29	64	27	56	24	7	3	0	0	42	18	238
<i>Journal of Anthropological Archaeology</i>	Woman	7	11	12	19	20	32	12	19	3	5	8	13	62
	Man	33	31	37	35	23	22	4	4	0	0	8	8	105
<i>Journal of Archaeological Theory and Method</i>	Woman	1	3	6	21	10	34	3	10	4	14	5	17	29
	Man	22	33	21	31	14	21	4	6	0	0	6	9	67
<i>Journal of Social Archaeology</i>	Woman	0	0	0	0	1	50	0	0	1	50	0	0	2
	Man	2	20	3	30	3	30	1	10	0	0	1	10	10
<i>Kiva</i>	Woman	0	0	0	0	1	33	0	0	1	33	1	33	3
	Man	6	55	0	0	3	27	1	9	0	0	1	9	11
<i>Latin American Antiquity</i>	Woman	4	9	16	35	16	35	6	13	3	7	1	2	46
	Man	16	27	21	36	17	29	2	3	0	0	3	5	59
<i>Mexicon</i>	Woman	1	25	0	0	2	50	1	25	0	0	0	0	4
	Man	2	29	4	57	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	14	7
<i>Plains Anthropologist</i>	Woman	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Man	5	45	3	27	2	18	0	0	0	0	1	9	11
<i>Southeastern Archaeology</i>	Woman	1	20	0	0	3	60	0	0	1	20	0	0	5
	Man	2	22	2	22	2	22	1	11	0	0	2	22	9
Total		208	23	245	27	233	26	73	8	28	3	113	13	900

Note: Papers with indeterminate author genders are noted to ensure percentage trends remain meaningful.

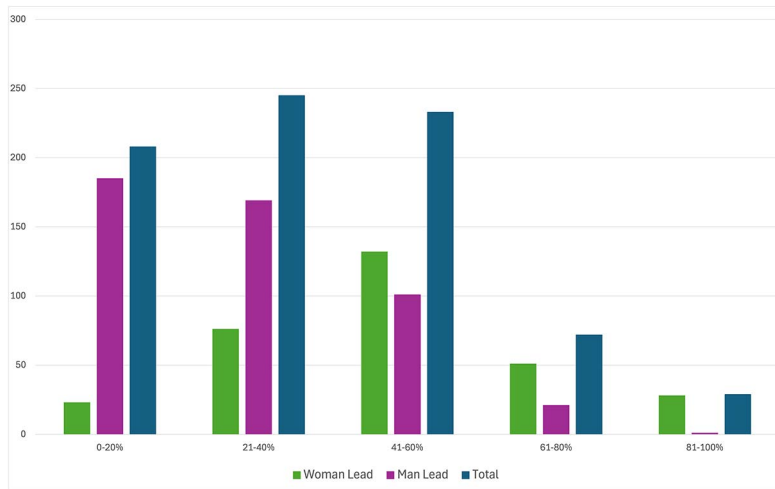


Figure 9. Number of articles falling into five categories based on the percentage of women coauthors.

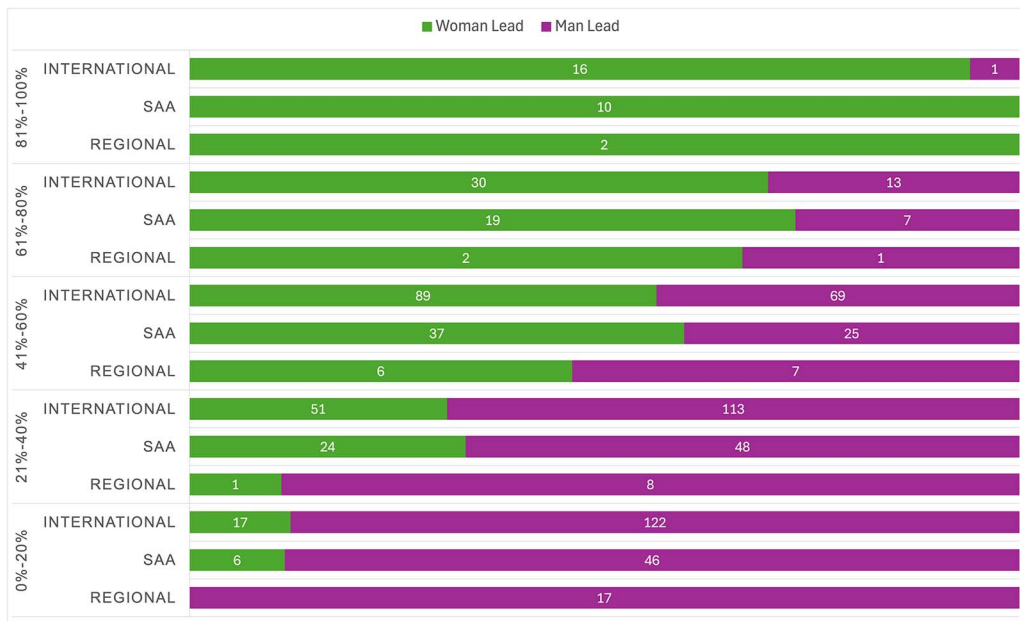


Figure 10. Proportion of articles by lead-author gender based on the percentage of women coauthors for each journal type.

considered the effects of these trends on coauthorship opportunities. Our analysis suggests that gender homophily plays a substantial role in those opportunities and that these trends are more pronounced for men, echoing other disciplines' findings (e.g., Araújo et al. 2017; Frances et al. 2020). Women publish about equally with men and other women, although there is variation across the individual journal outlets. When men are responsible for papers, less than one-third of the coauthors are women. This greater tendency for gender homophily by men is multiplied by the fact that men are responsible for 20% more large coauthorship studies, suggesting that women are not being given as many opportunities to be part of large collaborative teams in archaeology.

Although we unfortunately do not have the data to assess intersectional identities, our assumption based on Heath-Stout's (2020a) findings is that the majority of men and women captured by this analysis

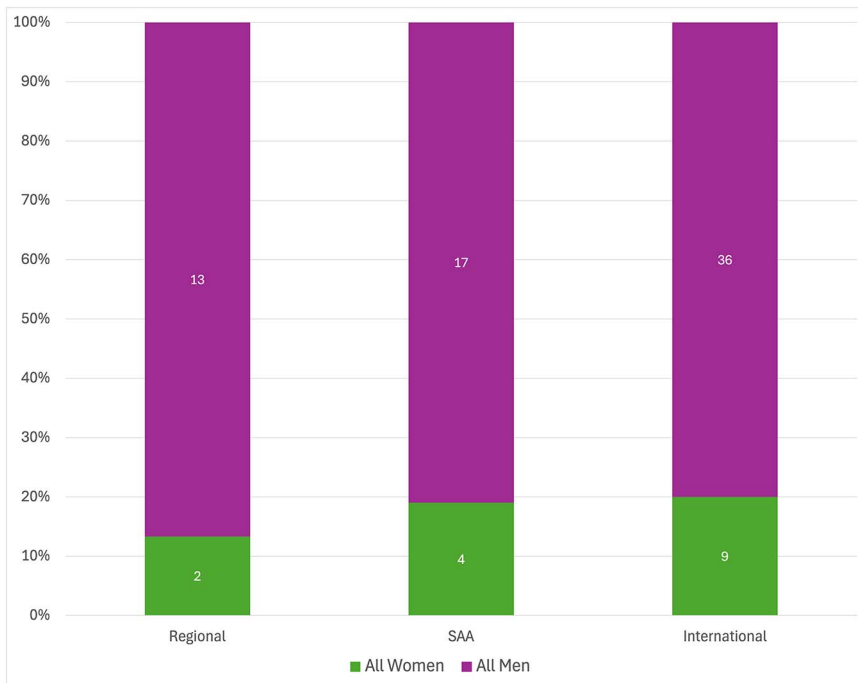


Figure 11. Proportion of articles written by all women and all men coauthors by journal type.

are likely straight, white, and cisgender. The principles of homophily shown to operate in publishing suggest that people tend to coauthor with others who share their identities, and further survey work may be revealing as to how intersectional identities affect inclusion in large coauthorship teams. What is clear from this analysis is that, to date, men have benefited more from trends of increasing coauthorship than have women. Just as Black women's work is undercited (Smith and Garrett-Scott 2021), we suspect the intersection of multiple marginalized identities—women of color, queer women, and so on—may result in lower likelihoods of being presented with opportunities to join these research teams.

Social networks have been shown to affect career trajectories in academic anthropology in the United States. Kawa and colleagues (2019), for instance, found that more than half of tenured and tenure-track anthropology professors came from only 15 graduate programs. In this study, individuals tied into large coauthorship networks—who are likely overwhelmingly men in archaeology given the findings from this study—are provided with opportunities to publish in higher quantities than scholars largely working on their own or with small groups of collaborators (Lee and Bozeman 2005), a practice that has been considered by some (Kovacs 2017) as a form of “symbolic violence” (*sensu* Bourdieu 1977). What remains unclear is how and why women are excluded from large authorship teams, particularly in smaller, regional-scale archaeological publications. Given the noted importance of friendship networks (Leighton 2020) in the discipline, women may not be considered in initial team formation. Alternatively, they may be left off authorship lists more often than men, as has been found to be the case in scientific research more broadly (Ross et al. 2022), or women may be more likely to be included in certain aspects of research, such as performing experiments, that are not always credited with authorship in archaeology (Macaluso et al. 2016). Although there is certainly a bureaucratic and service component to leading such large scholarly teams (e.g., coordinating, emailing, etc.), leadership of these teams potentially leads to greater personal benefit than most service work, which disproportionately falls to women and especially women of color (e.g., Ahmad 2024; Domingo et al. 2022; Misra et al. 2011). Given the clearly gendered trends in archaeology coauthorship, how can we reimagine authorship ascription in archaeology to be more equitable?

Recommendations and Future Directions

Collaboration in archaeology undoubtedly benefits the discipline and is likely to increase in the future. If the purpose of authorship is to “characterize the existence, circulation, and operation of certain discourses,” as noted by Foucault (1977:124), there is a critical need for more equitable practices of authorship ascription. We encourage individual authors to be more cognizant of the gendered trends laid out in this study. We also recognize that the issues are largely systemic and will require changes in how institutions assign and interpret credit. As such, our main recommendations focus on suggestions for archaeology organizations that sponsor journals and institutions.

As has been noted broadly, existing guidelines “determining scientific attribution are not well-known or understood by all parties” (Ross et al. 2022:141). In wide-ranging fields like archaeology, standards for authorship ascription are particularly unclear (see also Ouzman 2023). Discipline-specific organizations, such as the European Association of Archaeologists (EAA) and SAA, should clearly outline expectations for authorship ascription for their members (see also Pruschak and Hopp 2022:15–16). Such a move would align well with already established guidelines for promoting equality and inclusion, such as the *Code of Practice* developed by the EAA in 2022. Although defining authorship standards across a discipline with such breadth will undoubtedly be difficult, clear guidelines would provide a framework to both justify the decisions of leaders on a paper and allow for individuals to potentially advocate for their inclusion as an author. Clear guidelines would also remind archaeologists about expectations for authorship, potentially avoiding the unintentional exclusion of an individual from a publication due to misunderstandings regarding the threshold for inclusion. Further, regional organizations whose journals often display the greatest degrees of gender homophily can develop more specific guidelines tailored to the practice of archaeology in their areas. We encourage a consideration not only of how authorship itself can be more equitable in these regions but also of how and why the demography of archaeologists working there may be contributing to the disparity in authorship teams. Editor pieces critically examining their own practice in accepting submissions, selecting reviewers, and soliciting papers seem to be more common or at least more visible for larger-scale journals (e.g., Hanscam and Witcher 2023; Heath-Stout 2020b; Rautman 2012). Editors of regional journals could take an important step toward greater equity by assessing and publishing their own data on potential reviewer bias, submission rates, and publication rates. They could seek out contributions from women and other underrepresented groups and encourage greater self-awareness within their region of authorship trends and patterns of intentional or unintentional exclusion.

Archaeology journals can more uniformly adopt a way to measure inclusion. Although some argue that academic journals should jettison the concept of authorship and replace it with contributors and guarantors (Rennie et al. 1997), several publishers have adopted a modified solution by requiring contributor statements or disclosures for individual papers (see Allen et al. 2019; Biagioli 2003; Brand et al. 2015). The CRediT (Contributor Role Taxonomy) system is particularly noteworthy (see also Lyman 2025). Introduced in 2014 and now widely adopted by numerous academic journals, including *Advances in Archaeological Practice*, CRediT “responds to calls for greater transparency and recognition of author contributions” by asking coauthors to characterize their contribution using a 14-role taxonomy. This taxonomy includes not only tasks such as conceptualization but also data curation and funding acquisition (Allen et al. 2019:71), although it does not provide a clear way to capture community contributions that are key to collaborative work in archaeology (see also Lyman 2025; Ouzman 2023). Although not “a panacea for the problems of authorship” (Larivière et al. 2021:124), broad adoption of CRediT or a related system by archaeology journals would begin to address authorship issues.

Despite the improvements offered by contributor statements, additional interventions are needed. Archaeology would benefit from a way to denote contributors who are not responsible for or even agree with the entirety of a publication for the work they produced. Although these contributors are generally included in the acknowledgments sections, credit is not ascribed to those found in those sections. Vasilevsky and colleagues (2021) suggest the adoption of “badges” as are used by the Open Science Foundation (Kidwell et al. 2016) to signify specific contributions to a paper. For archaeology, this could include categories such as fieldwork, lab analyses, community knowledge/guidance, museum access,

translation, and figure making. In addition to providing recognition of those involved in the direct production of archaeological data (Heath-Stout 2024a:170; Leighton 2015, 2016; Mickel 2019, 2021; Mickel and Byrd 2021; Quinlan 2023), such a shift could also support greater acknowledgment of the labor involved in good mentorship and other service activities that often fall disproportionately to women and especially women of color (e.g., Ahmad 2024; Brodtkin et al. 2011; Domingo et al. 2022; El-Alayli et al. 2018; Misra et al. 2011; Reid 2021; Ross et al. 2022). If badges or other recognitions of contributions become widely recognized by the discipline of archaeology, they could become a regular fixture on CVs and resumes and be factored into hiring, retention, and promotion decisions. Reconceptualizing how we recognize contributions to publications could have cascading effects on the apportionment of value in our field, increasing the recognition of scholars who uplift the field as good citizens and mentors, as well as those following less traditional publication paths.

Finally, institutions could and should reconsider how authorship credit is allocated within the discipline. As Street and colleagues (2010:1464) explain, the “story of authorship with respect to scientific publications can be couched in terms of individual responsibility. Yet, there is an alternative story,” one focused on institutional incentives. They and others (e.g., Pruschak and Hopp 2022) thus encourage universities and other institutions to revise their hiring and promotion criteria and no longer consider the number of publications as the sole or most prominent criterion for research excellence. Recognizing that long-standing authorship ascription practices may be difficult to change, scholars have questioned whether each coauthor should receive full or perhaps only partial credit for a publication. As Boyer and colleagues (2017) summarize, “Quantifying the amount of work provided by different co-authors of a particular paper has been a recurrent problem” in academia, and researchers have proposed numerous ways of dividing credit, ranging from “simple calculations based on the rank of the authors such as . . . fractional authorship credit . . . to more complex credits, some even taking into account the controversial journal impact factor.”

Boyer and colleagues (2017) propose the Author Contribution Index (ACI), a numerical value “based on contribution percentages provided by the authors, preferably at the time of submission.” Because the ACI would be difficult to apply to previously published articles, we suggest that archaeology make use of two different measures: overall publication count and fractional authorship publication count. The first would provide a raw measure of productivity, regardless of the number of coauthors, whereas the second would standardize credit based on the number of authors on a paper (*sensu* Lee and Bozeman 2005). For instance, an individual who published five papers with four coauthors each would be assessed both as having five publications and as having contributed to 1.25 papers. When taken together, institutions would be in a better position to assess both the relative productivity of individuals who frequently collaborate with large teams and of those who most often publish individually, thereby making appropriate hiring, promotion, and other decisions regarding credit for work.

Large multiauthored papers in archaeology are only growing in prominence in the field. As these forms of scholarship continue to become more common, we also need to be aware of the ways inclusivity goals are supported or, in the case of gender equity, hindered. Greater awareness of the composition of coauthorship teams should allow for emerging issues to be addressed early and encourage scholars to think twice about both the formation of research teams and the assessment of others’ productivity.

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Supplementary Material 1. Raw data collected on multiauthored publications used for analysis (table).

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