



## NIKI BAVAR

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#### AFRICAN-AMERICAN FOODWAYS AT EARLY AMERICAN PLANTATIONS: A COMPARATIVE ZOOARCHAEOLOGY OF MONTICELLO AND MONTPELIER

#### BIOGRAPHY:

**NIKI BAVAR** is going to be starting her junior year at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She is double majoring in anthropology and art. Her research interests include community-based archaeology, ancient Latin American cultures, and cross-cultural views on gender and sexuality. Her long-term goal is to return to South America and incorporate local communities into her archaeological research in a decolonized fashion. Recently, Niki participated in a project that involved collecting pottery sherds from Roxbury, MA; she subsequently conducted historical research on a small chinaware mug and dated it to the late 18th century. She has also analyzed the motif patterns of a local Amherst cemetery and, inspired by her Roxbury project, is currently working on finding an existing program that could streamline the reconstruction process.



#### *Abstract:*

Several decades of zooarchaeological research at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and James Madison's Montpelier provide an opportunity to compare the food experiences of the enslaved communities at these Virginia Piedmont plantations. These observations are key to understanding the African-American roots of American cuisine. In this paper, we compare the results of existing material analyses from the housing of enslaved domestic and skilled workers at Monticello and Montpelier. Zooarchaeological analyses indicate that enslaved African-Americans at Monticello consumed proportionally more beef than at Montpelier, where pork was more common. Enslaved households at Montpelier had more access to meat from wild game, likely as a result of differences in agricultural intensification at the two plantations. Although the two plantations shared many similarities, both reveal different aspects of early African-American cuisine practices in the American South.

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