

# **BUTCHERY ANALYSIS IN AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY**

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All of the work in this thesis is my own, containing to the best of my knowledge and belief, no material published or written by another person except as referred to in the text.



21. 10. 91

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## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The following outline of the research design of this thesis has been added to assist the reader to more clearly understand the aims of the thesis.

The purpose of this thesis is twofold. Firstly, to point out problems with existing means of quantifying faunal remains, specifically Lyman's butchering unit method. Secondly, to present a new butchery analysis method and a new approach to archaeological faunal studies. The design of the thesis has been structured so as to present these two related goals. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 present essential background and Chapters 5, 6 and 7 present essential data, for the discussion in Chapter 8.

Chapter 2 presents the historic background. Chapter 3 presents the background for taphonomic discussions of archaeological fauna in Chapter 6. Taphonomy is discussed at this early point in the thesis because it is viewed as being the most important factor in all faunal studies (including butchery analysis), and thus has a direct bearing on the review of existing methodologies which follows in Chapter 4. Further, it logically follows the historical discussion in Chapter 2, as Chapter 3 also reviews the use of taphonomy in historical archaeology.

Chapter 4 fulfils the generalised aspects of the first purpose of this thesis, presenting the background to methods currently used to quantify faunal remains. This chapter is a critical review of the current 'state of affairs' of faunal quantification methodology. It brings attention to the enormity of the difficulties faced in the quantification of faunal remains and concludes by indicating the potential for butchery analysis to solve these difficulties.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 present the background data used in Chapter 8 to demonstrate the inadequacies with Lyman's butchering unit method. The data in these chapters is also used to develop a new butchery analysis method to assess the variability of butchery patterning within archaeological samples. The potential of this new method and a reappraisal of the potential of butchery analysis in faunal studies is discussed at length in Chapter 8, thus fulfilling the second purpose of this thesis.

Chapter 5 presents the ethnographic data base which is used to develop and test methodology. Chapter 6 presents the status of the archaeological data base with all the relevant information essential to permit reasonable assessment of the usefulness of this sample in assessing existing methodology and to test the new methodology presented in Chapter 7. Chapter 7 presents a new approach to using butchery analysis to assess butchery variability and the pattern of butchery practiced within a sample. Within this chapter, the usefulness of this new method is tested using the archaeological faunal data defined in the preceding chapter.

# ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with testing one aspect of faunal analysis in Australian historical archaeology. This is butchery analysis. The thesis critically evaluates Lee Lyman's 1979 butchering unit method as a means of quantifying faunal remains. It is concluded that Lyman's method has several theoretical flaws, the most serious being the failure of the basic premise of the method, that archaeological bone from domestic animals can be equated to meat. A new approach to analysing faunal remains using butchery analysis is suggested. This new method is tested using archaeological bone specimens from a nineteenth-century European midden. The results of this testing of the method proved most rewarding in the interpretation of fauna from this site. It is concluded that the current methodologies available for quantifying faunal remains suffer from many difficulties and that more behavioural information might be gained from the study of archaeological bone using a butchery analysis approach.

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