Contents

List of Figures xv

List of Tables xxvi

Acknowledgments xxvii

Frameworks | 1

1. Introduction 2

2. Framework: Knowledge production at Yutopian 8

3. Framework: Ambiguity and the lust for certitude 12

Project Context | 17

4. Narrative: Project origins in a British steak dinner 18

5. Socio-politics: Finding Northwest Argentina 23

6. Narrative: Archaeologists and lugareños meet at Yutopian 28

7. Backstory: Chronology in Northwest Argentina 35

8. Argument: Ceramic sequences and social processes 45

## Contents

10. **Socio-politics:** Should North American archaeologists dig in Argentina? 51

### STARTING TO DIG  |  55

11. **Argument:** The positionality of practice 56
12. **Episode:** Digging test pits 60
13. **Raw data:** What the test pits told us 63
14. **Narrative:** The incredible Pozo de Prueba 18 65
15. **Episode:** Extending test pit excavations 67
16. **Andean ways:** Inadvertent human remains 70
17. **Episode:** Opening Estructura Uno 71
18. **Raw data:** Inventory of artifact counts and special finds from Units 300, 301 and 302 76
19. **Narrative:** Emotional moments 79
20. **Andean ways:** The rodeo 81
21. **Argument:** Excavation forms 83

### ESTRUCTURA DOS  |  89

22. **Narrative:** Coming and going 90
23. **Episode:** Expectations and excavations in Estructura Dos 92
24. Los hermanos 98
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25. Raw Data: Inventory of special finds from Estructura Dos</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Narrative: Why was Estructura Dos disappointing?</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESTRUCTURA UNO</strong></td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Episode: Excavating Estructura Uno</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Descriptive Data: A tour of the occupation floor of Estructura Uno</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Raw Data: Inventory of special and general finds from Estructura Uno, Units 303–306</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Major Ambiguity: Metallurgy in the house?</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Argument: How the gendered household works</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Andean Ways: Buy the cage and get the chicken</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Episode: Analysis in the field</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESTRUCTURA TRES</strong></td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Narrative: Arrivals, decisions, decisions!</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Backstory: Andean ethnobotany and flotation at Yutopian</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Episode: Excavating Estructura Tres</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Raw Data: Inventory of special finds from Estructura Tres</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
39. Narrative: The peculiar pits of Estructura Tres 143
40. Andean ways: Honoring Pachamama 148

INTERPRETING NÚCLEO UNO | 153
41. Episode: Exploring Núcleo Uno’s shared patio 154
42. The square feature in the round patio 157
43. Descriptive data: The entranceways of Núcleo Uno 160
44. Narrative: The life history of Núcleo Uno 163
45. Cooking the data: Changing patterns of lithic consumption in Núcleo Uno—Chalcedony and obsidian 166
46. Narrative: How unique is Núcleo Uno at Yutopian? 169
47. Backstory: How unique is Núcleo Uno in the world? 171

ESTRUCTURA ONCE AND THE ISSUE OF REMODELING HOUSES | 175
48. Episode: The call of Estructura Once 176
49. Andean ways: Eating quirquincho (armadillo) 181
50. Raw data: Diagnostic ceramics by level from Estructura Once 183
51. Descriptive data: Remodeling and repositioning the doorways 184
52. Narrative: What did we learn from Estructura Once? 186
53. Puzzle: What about the saucer-shaped house floors? 188
Contents

54. Episode: Pozos de Prueba 12 and 12a 190

ESTRUCTURA CUATRO  |  193

55. Episode: Opening up Estructura Cuatro (1996) 194
56. Narrative in two modalities: The tri-lobate hearth 197
57. Descriptive data: The hearth occupation level in Estructura Cuatro 201
58. Narrative: Last-day fervor in Estructura Cuatro 205
59. Socio-politics: Good-byes 207
60. Episode: Estructura Cuatro excavations in 1998—The lower occupation 209
61. Raw data: Inventory of special finds from Estructura Cuatro 213
62. Descriptive data: The cache pit 215
63. Andean ways: Chañar drinks 218

LOOKING FOR NÚCLEO DOS  |  221

64. Narrative: Where was Estructura Cuatro’s entranceway? 222
65. Episode: Searching for Cinco and Núcleo Dos 226
66. Raw data: Inventory of special finds from Estructura Cinco 231
67. Narrative: Radical remodeling in Núcleo Dos 232
68. Argument: Estructura Cuatro—Ritual and quotidian 235
69. Narrative: A lab for all reasons

70. Socio-politics: Yutopian in the community

UNDERSTANDING YUTOPIAN AS AN EARLY FORMATIVE SETTLEMENT | 243

71. Raw data: Comparative characteristics of Yutopian structures

72. Raw data: Radiocarbon chronology

73. Narrative: The Formative settlement at Yutopian

74. Backstory: Plazas and a “public”

75. Argument: Yutopian’s boundaries and the site map

76. Socio-politics: Why Yutopian has so little Formative context

77. Entranceway ideologies

78. Andean ways: Water management at Yutopian

DATA FROM THE EXPERTS | 269

79. Data from the experts: Agricultural practices at Yutopian (with Jack Rossen)

80. Data from the experts: Plants and diet, now and then (with Jack Rossen)

81. Data from the experts: Phytolith facts

82. Data from the experts: Faunal remains (with Andrés Izeta)
Contents

83. Data from the experts: Ceramic forms and designs (with M. Fabiana Bugliani) 284
84. Cooking the data: Chalcedony and obsidian, part 2 290
85. Data: Stone tools from other angles 292
86. Data: Cross-mends and what they tell us 299
87. Data: Beads and spindle whorls 302

Cardonal by comparison  |  307

88. Narrative: The “other” Early Formative site—Cardonal 308
89. Argument: Testing archaeology and its methods 312
90. Socio-politics: Traveling to Cardonal 314
91. Episode: A short field season testing Cardonal house structures 317
92. Raw data: Special finds from the 2004 Cardonal field season 323
93. Socio-politics: North-South collaborations in archaeology 325
94. Backstory: Grinding stones (conanas, cutanas, morteros) and the holes in them 327
95. Episode: Later work at Cardonal 331
96. Andean ways: Llama caravans and long-distance exchange 333
97. Narrative: Cardonal and Yutopian 337

xiii
98. Wrap-up: Putting the project to bed 342
99. Postscript: Early Formative society—Where's the monumental? 345
100. Follow-through: References cited 350

Index 361