

ABSTRACT

THESIS: Red Ochre: An Archaeological Artifact

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Red ochre, an iron-oxide mineral has been found in prehistoric sites worldwide, in many types of sites. It has been noted as being present, but has not been afforded the status of artifact with the same level of analysis as other artifacts such as ceramics or lithics.

McCullough's Run, a multi-component prehistoric cemetery in Indiana contained red ochre with cremation burials. By treating red ochre as more than incidental to the site, but as an artifact, new information about mortuary behavior was learned. The red ochre was from locally or regionally available materials, and was placed with the deceased during cremation.

Therefore, red ochre must be treated as an artifact for comparing, contrasting information intra- and inter-site.

