How Many Late Woodland Projectile Point Types Were There in the North Carolina Piedmont?

**Introduction**

The purpose of our study is to quantitatively test for validity of the existing Late Woodland projectile point typology for the North Carolina Piedmont. We tested the traditional Caraway and Redtail typologies on a set of 1,420 points from the 26 sites in the Piedmont. We wanted to determine if a broader typology might be needed for the region. We compared all possible pairs of typologies with Principal Components Analysis (PCA), Discriminant Function Analysis (DFA), and the Similarity Coefficient (S-C) test.

**Methods**

**The Assemblage**

Projectile points were recovered from 18 late and contemporaneous North Carolina sites between 1,000 and 1,300 B.C. These late sites have been dated by OSL and radiocarbon methods, using more than 100 calibrated dates. The sites are located within the Piedmont of North Carolina and have varying levels of agricultural intensification. They range from simple residential houses to larger villages, and include a range of activities such as hunting, gathering, and farming.

**Results**

For each model, we selected features to reduce the number of variables and found three to four groups. The Caraway and Redtail typologies were then compared using a Similarity Coefficient (S-C) test to determine if the two existing typologies are significantly different. The S-C test results were used to determine which typology is more appropriate for the North Carolina Piedmont.

**Conclusions**

Our work displays some of the inherent difficulties of constructing typologies and using them to interpret past behavior as has been shown in other regions. However, we believe that our approach is valuable for future research in the North Carolina Piedmont. We suggest that future work should include a combination of traditional and computer-based approaches to better understand the technological and social dynamics of this region.

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**References Cited**