

Layer 3 (center layer)

Stratigraphy Card

Sherd

The widespread manufacture and use of pottery containers by Native Americans in the Central Plains is probably the most obvious of the technological innovations that took place around A.D.

1. Styles of pottery varied over time and from one culture to another. Native Americans continued to make pottery from local clays for a while after European contact (A.D. 1541 in Kansas). By the mid-nineteenth century the quality of Indian-made pottery had diminished. This may reflect a decline in the craft of pottery among Native Americans, mirroring an increased dependence on metal pots and pans acquired through the fur trade.

The size, shape, and decoration on pottery often provides clues about when, where, and who made a particular piece. This sherd, which appears to be from the body of a pot, is not large enough to determine the size or shape of the entire pot. It also lacks the distinctive decorative features found on the rims and upper parts of some pots from the Central Plains. These often provide important clues for researchers. On the other hand, it is obvious that this well-made piece lacks the more clumsy and bulky features associated with cultures just learning to make pottery.

