

A/S 107
Becoming Human: Archaeology and the Origins of Culture
Fall 1999

CLASS PERIOD -- MWF 9:10 - 10:10

PROFESSOR -- Susan Kus

OFFICE -- 105 Clough OFFICE HOURS -- M and F 10:20-11:20, W 1:30-3
or by appointment

COURSE STATEMENT

This course is intended to be an introduction to the methods and theories of anthropological archaeology. This course will also explore current explanations and available data on the origins of culture from 5 million years ago until the beginnings of plant and animal domestication (approximately 10,000 years ago.) (A Term II course on the archaeology of complex societies explores in depth the other major archaeological problem foci of the beginnings of agriculture and the development of states and civilizations.) You will be briefly introduced to the topics of agricultural origins and the development of rank and class societies in the last section of the course that will focus on the archaeology of the Southeastern United States.

To be a good archaeologist one must be a combination of a rigorous scientist, a clever detective and a sensitive humanist. The major challenge of archaeology is to piece together a story of past societies from minimal and often badly preserved material evidence in much the same way that Sherlock Holmes reconstructed past activities at the scene of a crime. However, rather than pursuing arch-villains, archaeologists are pursuing the roots of our cultural and social heritage. This is why an archaeologist is also motivated by a need to understand what it is to be human and to understand how it is we got to where we are today, culturally and socially speaking. As the famous British archaeologist, Sir Mortimer Wheeler said:

In a simple direct sense, archaeology is a science that must be lived, must be 'seasoned with humanity'. Dead archaeology is the driest dust that blows.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class attendance is required. Besides assigned readings, this course will require the completion of a "virtual archaeological field season of survey and excavation" (Fugawiland), the completion of a series of 6 short exercises, participation in class discussion, the viewing of several films outside regularly scheduled class time, (possibly a field trip), a final report and three exams.

The failure to successfully complete any of the assignments or exams will result in a failing grade for the course. Unexcused absences can significantly lower your grade and chronic absences will result in a failing grade for the course.

Final report topics are to be approved by October 22 and the final papers are to be handed in on December 6. You are to be prepared to give a brief summary of your final paper to the class.

Incompletes are not normally given in this class. In the rare case where an incomplete may be in order, the student must obtain permission from the instructor and complete all paper work for the Registrar before the day of the final exam.

GRADING

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| Fugawiland exercise..... | 10% |
| 6 Exercises @ 5% each..... | 25% |
| (lowest grade will be dropped) | |
| Exam I | 15% |
| Exam II | 15% |
| Final Exam | 20% |
| Final paper..... | 10% |
| Class Participation and Discussion | 5% |

REQUIRED READINGS

BASIC TEXTS

Thomas, D.H. Archaeology

Price, T. D. & A. Gebauer Adventures in Fugawiland

Price, T. D. & G. Feinman Images of the Past

COURSEPAK

Hill, James "A prehistoric community in Eastern Arizona." Contemporary Archaeology (Mark P. Leone, ed.) Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972, pp. 320-332.

Nelson, Sarah "Diversity of Upper Palaeolithic 'Venus' figurines and archeological mythology." Powers of Observation: Alternative Views in Archeology (S. Nelson and A. Kehoe, eds.) Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association, 1990, Number 2.

Bates, Marston "On being human", Chapter 1 in Gluttons and Libertines, New York: Vintage, 1967, pp 3-17.

Binford, Lewis "Life and Death at the Waterhole." Chapter 3 in Pursuit of the Past: Decoding the Archaeological Record by L. Binford. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1983, pp. 60-76.

Binford, Sally & Lewis Binford "Stone tools and human behavior." Scientific American, April 1969, Vol. 220, #4, pp. 70-84.

Trinkaus, E. and P. Shipman, Chapter 10 in The Neanderthals: Changing The Image Of Mankind. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992, pp. 384-410.

Lee, Richard "What hunters do for a living, or, How to make out on scarce resources." *Man the Hunter*, (Lee, R. & I. DeVore, eds.), Chicago:Aldine, 1968, pp. 30-48.

Diamond, Jared "The worst mistake in the history of the human race." *Discover*, May, 1987, pp 64-66.

Snyder, Gary "Re-inhabitation" *The Old Ways* San Francisco: City Lights, 1977, pp. 57-66.

Gero, Joan "Genderlithics: Women's roles in stone tool production." *Engendering Archaeology* (Joan Gero & Margaret Conkey, eds.) Oxford: Blackwell, 1992, pp. 163-193.

Watson, Patty Jo & Mary Kennedy "The development of horticulture in the Eastern Woodlands of North America: Women's role." *Engendering Archaeology* (Gero & Conkey, eds.) Oxford: Blackwell, 1992, pp. 255-275.

Kus, Susan. "Archaeologist as anthropologist: Much ado about something after all?" in *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, 4(3)-4(4), September 1997.

| DATE | TOPIC --- READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS |
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| Wed Aug 25 | Introduction to the course Exercise 1: Materiality and a 'way of being in the world' |
| (due Fri Aug 27 | Mon Aug 30) History of Prehistory READ Thomas(Preface, Ch 1), Fugawiland (Intro, Chs. 1 & 2) |
| Mon Aug 30 | Archaeological reasoning NOTE: Exercise 1 due READ Thomas(Ch 2), *Hill, *Nelson, Fugawiland (Chs. 3 & 4) |
| Wed Sep 1 | Archaeology as anthropology READ Fugawiland (Chs. 5-8) |
| Fri Sep 3 | CLASS MEETS IN COMPUTER LAB Bring questions about Fugawiland to class. After this class session in the lab begin working with |
| Fugawiland (Wed Sep 8) excavation strategy | "Report of Investigations" For next class session complete exercises on pp. 84-92. Work out with research partner(s). |

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| Mon Sep 6 | LABOR DAY RECESS |
| Wed Sep 8 | Space, time and form Be prepared to discuss excavation strategy in class READ Thomas (Ch 5) NOTE: Fugawiland final report is due on Wed Sep 15. |
| Fri Sep 10 | Archaeological fieldwork FILM: Other peoples' garbage READ Thomas (Ch 6) |
| Mon Sep 13 | Archaeological fieldwork (cont.) READ Thomas (Chs. 3 & 4) |
| Wed Sep 15 | Chronological control NOTE: Fugawiland report due today Exercises 2 & 3: Seriation (due Mon. Sep 20) Analysis of Material culture (due Wed Sep |
| 22) | |
| Fri Sep 17 | Archaeological Analysis READ Thomas (7 & 8) |
| Mon Sep 20 | Archaeological Analysis (cont.) NOTE: Exercise 2 due |
| Wed Sep 22 | Archaeological Analysis (cont.) NOTE: Exercise 3 due |
| Fri Sept 24 | Archaeological Analysis (cont.) FILM: The Iceman |
| Mon Sep 27 | EXAM 1 |
| Wed Sep 29 | What it is to be human READ *Bates Film in Media Center 6-7 PM (Leakey #1) |
| Fri Oct 1 | What it is to be human (cont.) Exercise 4: Archaeology on the Web (due Fri Oct 8) |
| Mon Oct 4 | The Pleistocene READ P&F (Intro, pp.7-41) |
| Wed Oct 6 | Lower Pleistocene Film in Media Center 6-8 PM (Leakey #2 & #3) |
| Fri Oct 8 | Lower Pleistocene (cont.) READ *Binford NOTE: Exercise 4 due Arrange an appointment to discuss book report selection for |
| final | report (choice to be made by Fri Oct 22) |
| Mon Oct 11 | Lower Pleistocene (cont.) READ P&F (pp. 43-73) |
| Wed Oct 13 | Middle Pleistocene |

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| | <p>READ P&F (pp. 75-97) Film in Media Center 6-7 PM (Leakey #4)</p> |
| Fri Oct 15 | <p>Middle Pleistocene (cont.) READ Thomas (11)</p> |
| Mon Oct 18 | FALL RECESS |
| Wed Oct 20 | <p>Upper Pleistocene READ P&F (pp. 98-121), *Binford & Binford</p> |
| Fri Oct 22 | <p>Upper Pleistocene (cont.) READ *Trinkaus & Shipman Exercise 5: Conventions of arch. drawing (due Fri Nov 29) NOTE: choice of book for report is to be finalized by this</p> |
| date | |
| Mon Oct 25 | <p>Upper Pleistocene (cont) Film: Leakey #5</p> |
| Wed Oct 27 | <p>Upper Pleistocene (cont) READ P&F (pp. 122-135)</p> |
| Fri Oct 29 | <p>Upper Pleistocene (cont) NOTE: Exercise 5 due</p> |
| Mon Nov 1 | <p>Post-Pleistocene READ P&F (pp. 137-159; 230)</p> |
| Wed Nov 3 | <p>Modern Gatherers and Hunters READ P&F (pp. 171-173), *Lee, *Diamond</p> |
| Fri Nov 5 | <p>Occupation of the New World Film: The Search for the First Americans READ *Snyder</p> |
| Mon Nov 8 | EXAM 2 |
| Wed Nov 10 | <p>Archaic READ Thomas (9), P&F (pp. 160-167)</p> |
| Fri Nov 12 | <p>Archaic (cont) READ P&F (pp. 235-241), *Gero</p> |
| Mon Nov 15 | <p>Woodland and Hopewell READ Thomas (10), P&F (pp. 242-247)</p> |
| Wed Nov 17 | <p>Woodland and Hopewell (cont) READ P&F (pp. 175-181; 204-205; 216-219; 228-230), *Watson & Kennedy</p> |
| Fri Nov 19 | <p>Moundbuilders Film: Myth of the Moundbuilders”</p> |
| Mon Nov 22 | <p>Beginning of the Mississippian READ P&F (pp. 248-259; 279-281) Exercise 6: Archaeology (ab)use in the present (due Fri</p> |
| Dec 3) | |

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| Wed Nov 24 | THANKSGIVING RECESS |
| Fri Nov 26 | THANKSGIVING RECESS |
| Mon Nov 29 | Mississippian |
| Wed Dec 1 | Decline of the Mississippian |
| Fri Dec 3 | Archaeology in the Present READ Thomas (12), *Kus NOTE: Exercise 6 due |
| Mon Dec 6 | Book Reports due NOTE: Be prepared to discuss your report in class |
| Wed Dec 8 | Final remarks |

FINAL PAPERS

This paper should be minimally 12-15 pages in length. The core of the paper will focus on one or more recent professional publications in archaeology and should concern a topic, a culture and/or a region that is of personal interest to you chosen in consultation with me. (Some sample themes are listed below.) The paper should follow the style guide for the journal, *American Antiquity*, which is to be found in Volume 57, no. 4, October 1992 at the end of the issue.

Papers should conform roughly to the following outline:

I Introduction: What is the question or issue in prehistory that you are addressing? Why is the question or issue of interest in terms of our understanding of human development and/or the nature of cultural behavior and/or the nature of archaeological research? If applicable, what is the way researchers have gone about trying to answer or study the question or issue (e.g., methods, information sources, basic assumptions)?

II Book Report: This section should be a lengthy resume and critical discussion of the book or books upon which you have focused your attention.

III Recent Journal Articles: This section should include some additional research on your part involving the central or related themes of your report as discussed in recent

articles in professional journals such as *American Antiquity*, *American Anthropologist*, *World Archaeology* and *Current Anthropology*.

IV Extended Conclusion: As part of your final remarks add some personal statement on what you learned in researching your topic. That is, have you learned anything interesting about archaeology and archaeologists while doing this paper?

* Your ability to integrate into this discussion what you have learned in class from lectures, discussions and readings will play a critical role in the grading of this paper.

** Some suggested topics: populating the New World, the “disappearance” of Neanderthals, post-pleistocene faunal extinctions and the role of human intervention, how animals are domesticated, what is involved in paleoethnobotanical research, what is involved in the analysis of human remains, contemporary Native Americans and archaeological research (e.g., reburials), ethnoarchaeology, underwater archaeology, deciphering Maya glyphs, archaeoastronomy, the archaeology of slavery and plantation life, engendering archaeology, Chinese prehistory, archaeology of the Pacific islands

You should have a topic chosen and approved by October 22.

The papers and their class presentation are due December 6.