

ANTH 6000 Contemporary Archaeological in Theory

Fall 2023

M. Lycett

This graduate seminar is an introduction to the method and theory of contemporary anthropological archaeology. We begin from a discussion of the archaeological record as a disciplinary construct, emphasizing the problem of inference about past and present processes and practices from material culture. We consider the history of archaeological thought and practice in relation to changing understandings and theorizations of anthropology, highlighting the ways that archaeology is related to both the subdisciplines of anthropology and other disciplines more generally. Relying on this historical context as background, the course confronts questions of colonialism and both analytical object and legacy, and considers how contemporary archaeologists engage with identity and practices of the self, decolonization, Indigenous archaeologies, the 'material turn' in social theory, and social memory and construction of heritage. While these topics do not exhaust the theoretical concerns of contemporary archaeology, they provide a range of insights into the subdiscipline as a dimension of anthropology.

As a core seminar, this course is designed to acquaint students with the major debates in the field and to help them develop their critical faculties. All first year Anthropology graduate students are required to take the four core seminars (the other seminars are in Cultural, Linguistic, and Biological/Evolutionary). The core seminars are the basis for comprehensive written exams taken at the end of the first year of study. A list of study questions will be provided at the end of the seminar for use in exam preparation.

Office Hours

Office hours W 10-12 or by appointment. *I will hold office hours in my LAB, Museum 415.* My email address is mlycett@sas.upenn.edu.

Assignments

1) Annotated Bibliography. Consider this assignment to be a resource for your own use and exam preparation. List all of your readings in *American Antiquity* format with a brief annotation noting: a) the argument or contents; and b) the import or relevance of the reading. Annotations may be anywhere from a sentence or two to a short paragraph. Since we will be splitting up some of the readings by individuals or groups, no two bibliographies will be the same. YOUR BIBLIOGRAPHY IS DUE ON THE LAST DAY OF FINALS.

2) Discussion Posts. For each course meeting enumerated below, you will be asked to submit a *one-paragraph discussion post based the readings for that topic*. You should identify a set of no more than three points for future discussion. These points may: 1) identify the major issues raised by an author or authors; 2) consider the points of contrast or tension between authors; or 3) raise questions for future discussion based on your reading of the material. The format for these discussions is open and quite informal. You may complete the assignment as a narrative, a numbered list, or an outline. Keep in mind that you should provide enough context to help the

other members of the class understand the importance of each discussion point. *DISCUSSION POSTS ARE DUE AT 5PM THE SUNDAY BEFORE CLASS*. I will post a response with some topics for in-class discussion the morning before class.

3) You will be asked to complete three short (5-7page) essays dealing with major themes of the course. Essay questions and guidelines will be posted on Canvas at least one week prior to their due date. Expect the prompts and guidelines to closely match the form and style of comprehensive exams. These essays are best used as preparation for discussing the relation between theory, method, and practice as exemplified by the readings in their historical and intellectual context. Always aim for the elusive balance between brief and incisive.

3) Finally, you will be evaluated on the basis of your contribution to class discussions. Each of you will be responsible for *participating in class discussions* on a day-to-day basis. On any given day, you should be prepared to introduce up to three questions based on the readings for that day. We will give every participant ample opportunity to frame our discussion of the readings.

All assignments for this class should be submitted on CANVAS or as an email attachment.

References should be cited using social science conventions, i.e. listing author's last name and date of publication in parentheses within the text, and the full citation for all referenced articles should appear at the end of your text. We will use *American Antiquity* as a style guide.

https://documents.saa.org/container/docs/default-source/doc-publications/style-guide/saa-style-guide_english_updated_2021_final08023c15928949dabd02faafb269fb1c.pdf?sfvrsn=c1f41c1b_2

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to be familiar with the [Code of Academic Integrity](#). See tips for avoiding plagiarism on the [Library's website](#).

Support Resources for Students: Please read the [Canvas Student Resources page](#) for this course for more information on educational and support resources including:

Penn COVID FAQs

Support for Academic Skills

Wellness Resources

Disabilities and accommodations

Fairness in Course Administration policies

Readings

Most readings including journal articles or book chapters will be posted on Canvas as PDF files.

[R] Indicates a book on reserve in the Museum Library. Optional readings are not posted.

Readings are assigned by week in the course outline, below. Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in class and posted on Canvas.

The following reference works may be useful for anyone who wants extra background or structure:

Renfrew and P. Bahn, 2020. *Archaeology: Theory, Methods, and Practice*, eighth edition.
Olsen, et al. 2012. *Archaeology: the Discipline of Things*.
Trigger, 2006. *History of Archaeological Thought*, second edition.
Johnson 2019. *Archaeological Theory: an introduction*, third edition.
Willey and J.A. Sabloff 1993, *A History of American Archaeology*, third edition.

Course Outline

The following list includes the topics we expect to cover this semester and the readings most relevant to their in-class discussion. Readings supplement but are not identical to class discussions. Many readings crosscut topics. Expect additions, deletions, and other changes to be announced throughout the semester. You will quickly note that there are too many readings for any one person to reasonably cover. We will discuss strategies for this problem and be parceling out sections of larger works to cut down on the burden.

September 11.

Part 1. Meaning Making in Archaeology: The Archaeological Record.

Lucas, 2012, *Understanding the Archaeological Record*, ch. 1.
Jones, 2002, *Archaeological Theory and Scientific Practice*, ch 1.
L. Clarke 1973, Archaeology: the Loss of Innocence, *Antiquity* 47:6-18.
R. Binford 1983. *In Pursuit of the Past: Decoding the Archaeological Record*, ch.1-3. [R]
Andrews, J.C. Barrett, and J.S.C. Lewis, 2000. Interpretation not record: the practice of archaeology, *Antiquity* 74:525-30.
Wylie 2002 [1992], On 'Heavily Decomposing Red Herrings': Scientific Method in Archaeology and the Ladening of Evidence with Theory, in *Thinking from Things: Essays in the Philosophy of Archaeology*.

Part 2. Precursors and Interlocutors

H. Morgan 1877, *Ancient Society*. Part I
Hatch 1973, *Theories of Man and Culture*, ch. 2, Tylor and Boas.
A. Chapman 1985, Arranging Ethnology: A.H.L.F. Pitt Rivers and the Typological Tradition, in *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture*.
Optional, Background:
W. Stocking, 1987, *Victorian Anthropology*.
H. Morgan, 1965 [1881], *Houses and House-Life of the American Aborigines*

September 18. Anthropological theory and the development of culture history.

Part 1. A Boasian Anthropology

W. Stocking, ed. 1982, *A Franz Boas Reader: the Shaping of American Anthropology, 1883-1911*. Selections: 1,7,8, 31, 34, and introduction (optional: 27, 32, 44, and part IX).

Optional, Background:

W. Stocking, ed. 1982, *A Franz Boas Reader: the Shaping of American Anthropology, 1883-1911*. (27, 32, 44, and part IX).

Kuper, 2005. *The Reinvention of Primitive Society*, ch. 1-4 and 6.

Part 2. Culture History in Practice

L. Kroeber 1948, *Anthropology*: pp. 252-385, 411-444.

Optional, Background:

Linton 1936, *The Study of Man*.

September 25

Part 1. An archaeology of culture history.

W. Taylor 1948, *A Study of Archaeology*. Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association, 69, Menasha. (reprinted 1967, 1983 SIU press), pp. 25-151. [R]

R. Willey and P. Phillips 1958, *Method and Theory in American Archaeology*, pp. 1-57. [R]

Rouse, "The Strategy of Culture History," in *Anthropology Today*, ed. A.L. Kroeber, pp. 57-76.

R. Binford 1965, "Archaeological Systematics and the Study of Culture Process," *American Antiquity* 31:203-210 (also reprinted in *An Archaeological Perspective*).

V. Flannery 1967, "Culture History vs. Culture Process: a Debate in American Archaeology," review of Willey in *Scientific American*, 217(2):119-122 (also reprinted in *Contemporary Archaeology*, ed. M. P. Leone).

Part 2 Case studies in Creating Cultures.

A) *Areal synthesis in the Americas*: A.V. Kidder [1924]; *An introduction to the study of Southwestern archaeology* [R]. Pp. 36-136.

B) *Race, language, & Culture: the Indo-Europeans*: V.G. Childe 1950, *The Dawn of European Civilization*; ch.12; C. Renfrew 1973, *Before Civilization*, ch.2.

October 2. Systematics as Theory

Part 1. Systematics and the Practice of Archaeology: Process and Explanation.

Wissler, 1914, "Material Cultures of the North American Indians", *American Anthropologist*, 16:447-505.

Willey, et al. 1956, "An Archaeological Classification of Culture Contact Situations," in *Seminars in Archaeology: 1955*, ed. R. Wauchope, Memoirs of the Society for American Archaeology, No. 11.

C A. Krieger, 1944, The Typological Concept, *American Antiquity*, 9:271-288.

O. Brew, 1946, The Use and Abuse of Taxonomy, in *Archaeology of Alkali Ridge, Southeastern Utah*, ed. J.O. Brew, pp. 44-66, Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology 21,

Part 2. Typology as Explanation: The Ford Spaulding Debate.

C. Spaulding 1953, Statistical Techniques for the Discovery of Artifact Types, *American Antiquity*, 18:305-313.

C. Spaulding 1953, Review of Ford, in *American Anthropologist* 55:588-591, and responses back and forth by Ford and Spaulding, vol. 56, 1954, pp. 109-114. (review also reprinted in *Contemporary Archaeology*, ed. M.P. Leone)

A. Ford 1954, "On the Concept of Types, Revisited" *American Anthropologist*, 56:42-54.

October 9. Functionalism as Critique and Practice.

Part 1. Critique

R. Radcliffe-Brown, *On the Concept of Function in Social Science*. Reprint Series in Sociology, 1993.

John Bennett 1943, "Recent Developments in the Functional Interpretation of Archaeological Data," *American Antiquity*, 9:208-219.

Kluckhohn 1940, "The Conceptual Structure in Middle American Studies," in *The Maya and Their Neighbors*, ed. A.M. Tozzer (also reprinted in *Contemporary Archaeology*)

H. Steward and F.M. Setzler, 1938, "Function and Configuration in Archaeology," *American Antiquity*, 4(1): 4-10.

Part2. Program.

Wiley and Phillips 1958, pp. 61-205; [R]

Taylor 1948, pp. 152-202. [R]

Optional, Case Studies:

Prehistoric Economy: G.D. Clark 1954, *Star Carr* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [R]
(see also 1974, *Star Carr: a case study in Bioarchaeology*, Addison Wesley Modular Publications 10:1-42)

Cultural Ecology in Place: Willey, G.R. 1953, *Prehistoric Settlement Patterns in the Viru Valley, Peru*. Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin, 155, Washington D.C.

Optional, Background:

R. Radcliffe-Brown, *A Natural Science of Society*, 1948 [1957], The Free Press, Glencoe.

Elman R. Service 1962, *Primitive Social Organization: an Evolutionary Perspective*.

G. Childe 1951, *Social Evolution*. Henry Schuman, NY

Kuper 1983. *Anthropology and Anthropologists: The Modern British School*.

October 16. Articulated Functionalism: the "New Archaeology" to 1968.

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Part 1. Programmatic

R. Binford 1964; "A consideration of archaeological research design," *American Antiquity*, 29:425-441.

R. Binford 1968; "Archaeological Perspectives," in *New Perspectives in Archaeology*, ed. Sally R. and L.R. Binford, 1968, Aldine, Chicago.

Kent V. Flannery 1968; "Archaeological Systems Theory and Early Mesoamerica," in B. Meggers, ed., *Anthropological Archaeology in the Americas*, pp 67-87, Anthropological Society of Washington, Washington, D.C.

V. Flannery 1976, in *The Early Mesoamerican Village*, pp. 1-11, 369-373.

Part 2. Case Studies

A) *Mother's Brother in Northern Arizona*: William Longacre 1970, *Archaeology as Anthropology: A Case Study*, Anthropological Papers of the University of Arizona [R]; James Hill 1970, *Broken K Pueblo; a prehistoric community in Eastern Arizona*.

Optional, Background:

David L. Clarke 1968, *Analytical Archaeology*, pp. 1-82, 131-437;

Lewis R. Binford 1962, "Archaeology as Anthropology," *American Antiquity*, 28(2):217-225.

Leslie A. White 1945; "History, Evolutionism, and Functionalism: three types of interpretation of culture," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 1(2):221-248.

Eggan, 1954, Social Anthropology and the Method of Controlled Comparison, *American Anthropologist*, 56:743-763.

October 23. Two Pathways

Part 1. Epistemological Crisis and Methodological Response

Michael B. Schiffer 1972, Archaeological Context and Systemic Context, *American Antiquity*, 37:156-165.

R. Binford 1977, General Introduction, *For Theory Building in Archaeology*, ed. LRB, Academic, NY. pp. 1-10.

R. Binford 1981a, pp. 1-30 in *Bones: Ancient Men and Modern Myths*, NY, Academic Press.

Optional, Background: Lucas 2012, ch.3

Optional, Case Studies:

Binford 1981, *Bones: Ancient Men and Modern Myths*.

Binford 1983, Chapters 6-7.

K. Brain 1981, *Hunters or the Hunted*.

Part 2. Symbolic, Structural, and Interpretive Archaeologies: Critique and Practice.

Hodder 2004, *Theory and Practice in Archaeology*, Routledge, chapters 2,3,5,6,

Shanks and C. Tilley 1989, "Archaeology into the 1990s," (and comments); *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 22(1):1-12.

Mark P. Leone et. al. 1987, "Toward a Critical Archaeology," *Current Anthropology*, 28(3): 283-302.

Optional, Background:

Shanks and C. Tilley 1987, *Social Theory and Archaeology*, pp. 1-60.

Hodder 2004, ch. 9-14.

J. Watson and M. Fotiadis, 1990, The Razor's Edge: Symbolic-Structuralist Archaeology and the Expansion of Archaeological Inference, *American Anthropologist*, 92:613-629.

Knapp 1996; "Archaeology Without Gravity," *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*,

October 30. Expanding Recognition, Shifting Perspectives

Part I. Power, Standpoint, and Identity: Critique and Practice.

Wylie 1992. Feminist Theories of Social Power: Some Implications for a Processual Archaeology," in *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 25(1):51-68.

Wylie 1996, Alternative Histories: Epistemic Disunity and Political Integrity, in *Making Alternative Histories: The Practice of Archaeology and History in Non-Western Settings*, edited by Peter R. Schmidt and Thomas C. Patterson

Brumfiel 1992; Breaking and Entering the Ecosystem. *American Anthropologist*.

Meskell, 2002, The Intersections of Identity and Politics in Archaeology. *Annual Review of Anthropology* Vol. 31:279-301.

Paynter and McGuire 1991; The Archaeology of Inequality, in *The Archaeology of Inequality*, ed. R.H. McGuire and R. Paynter.

Part 2. Case Study

Voss, Barbara L. 2008 *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis: Race and Sexuality in Colonial San Francisco*.

November 6. *The Problem of Colonialism.*

Part 1. Confronting the Beast (or not)

SSRC 1954. Acculturation: An Exploratory Formulation The Social Science Research Council Summer Seminar on Acculturation, 1953. *American Anthropologist* 56: 973-1000.

Deagan, Kathleen 1996 Colonial Transformation: Euro-American Cultural Genesis in the Early Spanish-American Colonies. *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 52:135-160

Lightfoot, K.G. 1995. Culture Contact Studies: Redefining the Relationship between Prehistoric and Historical Archaeology. *American Antiquity*, 60:199-217.

Schneider, Tsim D., and Katherine Hayes 2020. Epistemic Colonialism: Is it Possible to Decolonize Archaeology? *American Indian Quarterly* 44:127–148.

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Montgomery, L.M. 2022 The Archaeology of Settler Colonialism in North America. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 51: 475-491.

Nash, S.E. and C. Colwell 2020. NAGPRA at 30: The Effects of Repatriation. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 49:225–39.

November 13. *The Problem of Colonialism. Part 2. An Indigenous Archaeology*

Schneider, T.D. 2021. *The Archaeology of Refuge and Recourse: Coast Miwak Resilience and Indigenous Hinterlands in Colonial California*.

Optional, Background:

FORUM: DECOLONIZING ANTHROPOLOGY: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES. *American Ethnologist* 50:345-461.

November 20. A Decade of Decolonizing

Oland, M., S.M, Hart, and L. Frink editors, 2012. *Decolonizing Indigenous Histories*.

Schneider, T.D. and L.M. Panich, editors, 2022 *Archaeologies of Indigenous Presence*.

November 27. New Materialities I

Part 1.

Nativ, A. 2014 Anthropocentricity and the Archaeological Record: Towards a Sociology of Things. *Norwegian Archaeological Review* 47(2): 180–195.

Fowler, Chris, and Oliver JT Harris. 2015 Enduring Relations: Exploring a Paradox of New Materialism. *Journal of Material Culture* 20(2): 127–148.

Lucas, Gavin, 2015 Archaeology and Contemporaneity. *Archaeological Dialogues* 22(1): 1–15.

Wylie, Archaeological cables and tacking: the implications of practice for Bernstein's Options beyond Objectivism and Relativism, *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 19:1-18. (and in *Thinking from Things*)

Part 2, Case Study.

Potter, A.E. et al. 2022. *Remembering Enslavement: Reassembling the Southern Plantation Museum*. Chapters 1, 2, 7.

December 4. New Materialities II

Part 1. Limits

Edward Swenson & Craig N. Cipolla 2020. Representation And Materiality In Archaeology: A Semiotic Reconciliation, *World Archaeology*, 52:313-329.

L. Davis, 2020. *How Artifacts Afford: The Power and Politics of Everyday Things*. Chapter 3.

Part 2. Uses

H. McGuire, 2020. The Materiality and Heritage of Contemporary Forced Migration. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 49:175–191.

Jason De León, 2015. *The Land of Open Graves*, chapters 2,3, and 7.

Situated History: Social Memory and the production of Heritage.

Part 1. Place, Memory, Commemoration.

Tim Ingold, 1993. The Temporality of Landscape. *World Archaeology* 25:152-174.

Susan Alcock, 2002. *Archaeologies of the Greek Past: Landscape, Monuments and Memories*. Cambridge: University Press, chapter 1

Van Dyke, 2008 Memory, Place, and Landscape. In *Handbook of Landscape Archaeology*, edited by Bruno David and Julian Thomas, pp. 277- 284. Left Coast Press.

Rajagopalan, 2012 Preservation and Modernity: Competing Perspectives, Contested Histories and the Question of Authenticity, In *The SAGE Handbook of Architectural Theory*, edited by C. Greig Crysler, Stephen Cairns & Hilde Heynen, pp. 308-324.

Part 2. Fraught Pasts.

Guha-Thakurta, 2013, The Production and Reproduction of a Monument: The Many Lives of the Sanchi Stupa, *South Asian Studies*, 29:1, 77-109.

Ober, 2022. *Dust on the Throne: The Search for Buddhism in Modern India*, Introduction and chapter 2.

Optional, Background.

Jeffrey K. Olick, J.K., V. Vinitzky-Seroussi, and D. Levy, 2011. *The Collective Memory Reader*.

Nora, P. 1989, Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire. *Representations* 26: 7-24.

R. Trouillot, 1995. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Beacon Press