

ANT 3712-001
Archaeology of the Earliest Civilizations
Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 2:00-2:50 AM

Classroom: Blair 1165
Office: Blair 3153
Office Hours: MWF 12:00-2:00 or by appointment

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Zovar
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Office Phone: 581-6593

Course Description

Archaeology is a social science that investigates what the material remains of human culture can teach us about the social organization and way of life of various cultural groups in the past (and occasionally in the present). In this class we will have a brief introduction to the ways of doing archaeology, discussing what we can learn from the past and why it is important. You will have the opportunity to learn to think as an archaeologist, asking archaeological questions and making critical inferences. During this class we will consider two central themes: How do we know what we think we know about past civilizations? How is knowledge about the past important in the modern world today?

The course is divided into three units, each of which focuses on a particular book with different archaeological themes. In Unit 1, you will be introduced to archaeology and we will discuss what it is that archaeologists actually do and how we are able to learn about the past without the aid of written records. We address the difficulty – but also the possibility – of making inferences about the archaeological past through a consideration of the art and artifacts left behind by our most ancient ancestors. In Unit 2, we will be exploring the archaeological heritage of the Old World (Africa, Europe, and Asia), at the same time discussing the history of archaeological research as well as concerns over archaeological heritage, tourism, and “ownership” of the past. In Unit 3, we will address the archaeology of the Americas, also exploring some of the myths and fantasies that have built up around archaeological exploration.

Course Objectives

In this course you will learn:

- A basic introduction to archaeological practice
- How archaeologists come to know what we know about the past
- An introductory survey of important world archaeology sites
- How to construct an anthropological argument in archaeology
- How to critique popular presentations of archaeology
- How to think critically about constructions of the past and how they are important in the present

Course Readings

Three books are required for this course:

Fagan, Brian M.

2004 *The Rape of the Nile: Tomb Robbers, Tourists, and Archaeologists in Egypt*. Revised and Updated. Cambridge: Westview Press.

Grann, David

2010 *The Lost City of Z: A Tale of Deadly Obsession in the Amazon*. New York: Vintage Departures

Lewis-Williams, David

2002 *The Mind in the Cave: Consciousness and the Origins of Art*. London: Thames & Hudson Ltd.

These texts will be supported by additional readings posted on Desire2Learn.

Method of Evaluation

Exams – (15% each; 45% total)

There will be three exams over the course of the semester – two regular in-class exams and one final exam. The exams are not cumulative, although the final exam will require you to utilize some of the key concepts stressed throughout the course. Exams will include *both* material covered in lecture *and* material from the assigned readings. Exam questions will include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, maps, and short answer/essay questions.

Short Reports – (5% each; 25% total)

A total of five short reports (~2 pgs. each) are designed to help you further reflect on the material that we are covering during class and to give you an opportunity to explore topics that may interest you in a little more detail. Some of these assignments will help you to prepare for your research project (see below). The five assignments are as follows:

- *Archaeologist Report* – Provide a short biography of an archaeologist who interests you and is working in the region you are focusing on for your research project.
- *Garbage Project* – With permission, go through a friend's garbage. (Wear gloves!) Write up a report of what you find, and consider what you might be able to tell about your friend from his/her garbage alone. What aspects of your friend's life are you not able to address? Did you learn anything new about your friend from this exercise?
- *Project Background* – See what Wikipedia and other non-academic on-line sources have to say about the area you have chosen to research, and write a brief summary of what you have learned. Also consider: How can you tell what information is credible and what is not? What do you want to learn more about? Where will your research plans take you from here?
- *Article Review* – Find and read a peer-reviewed academic research article about the area you have chosen to research. Please include a summary of the article as well as a critical evaluation drawing on some of the concepts discussed in class. Also consider: How does

this article compare to the non-academic sources you referenced for your “Project Background”? Do you have any questions about the content of this article?

- *Your Room in the Future* – Look around your bedroom. Imagine there was some form of natural or other disaster (zombie apocalypse?) and your room was abandoned as is. What would be left in 1000 years? How might an archaeologist from the future interpret your culture based on your material belongings? Write a short report of your imagined findings. Have fun with this assignment!

Research Project – (20% total, divided between different assignments)

During the first week of class you will be asked to choose a specific cultural group to focus on for your final paper. As the class progresses, you will also need to choose a specific archaeological question to address. You will be asked to give a short (~10 minute) presentation on your chosen group and topic when we cover that area during our survey of world archaeology. In addition, you will need to prepare a final paper. You can choose between writing a formal research paper or a work of archaeological fiction. (More information on this project will be handed out at a later date.)

Class Participation – (10% total)

Most class periods will include time for small and/or large group discussions as well as some hands-on projects. You are expected to come to class prepared and ready to participate fully in all classroom activities. This means that attendance is *very* important. You cannot participate if you are not here! If you need to miss class for a work, court, or medical reason, please contact me *before* class to make sure your absence will be excused. Except under extraordinary circumstances, only three absences will be granted before it begins to affect your grade.

Extra Credit

Students will receive 3 extra credit points (out of a class total of 1000) if you email me a link to or bring in a copy of a recent news article that deals with an archaeological topic or is relevant to what we are discussing in class. Be prepared to describe the article to the class. (You are only allowed to take advantage of this extra credit opportunity five times over the course of the class, and only once in any given class period.) Other extra credit opportunities may be announced as the semester progresses.

Important Dates

- August 31 (F) – Archaeologist Report due
- Sept. 14 (F) – Garbage Project due
- Sept. 24 (M) – Exam 1
- Oct. 3 (W) – Project Background due
- Oct. 19 (F) – Article Review due
- Oct. 29 (M) – Exam 2
- Nov. 9 (F) – Your Room in the Future due
- Nov. 30 (F) – Research Project Rough Draft ready for Peer Review
- Dec. 7 (F) – Research Project Final Draft due
- Dec. 12 (W) – Final Exam (2:45-4:45 PM)

Classroom Policies

Paper Drafts

I am happy to meet with you individually to discuss your papers at any stage in the writing process, and will also respond to specific questions that are emailed to me at any time. If you would like for me to read a complete paper draft, please turn it in to me by Friday, November 16 (right before Thanksgiving). This ensures that I will have enough time to read through it and provide useful comments.

Late Papers

Hard copies of all written assignments are due on the date noted on the class syllabus. Electronic copies are *only* accepted if you have an excused absence. Papers that are turned in late will lose half a letter grade. Paper that are extremely late (more than 1 week) will lose one – two full letter grades.

Make-Up Exam Policy

Exams will be given in class on the date noted on the syllabus. Make-up exams will only be given in extraordinary circumstances and if I have approved your absence *before* the scheduled exam.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is taken very seriously at Eastern Illinois University. Plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty will result in severe penalties and disciplinary measures, which could include failure of the assignment or exam or of the course. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please let me know.

Discussion

Please respect your fellow students, your instructor, and the classroom. Some of the topics discussed in this class may lead to spirited debates, and I encourage the expression of *courteous* academic disagreement. I do ask, however, that you refrain from interrupting, talking over, or disparaging other students and that you try to keep your discussion on-topic. If you have any questions or comments that you do not feel comfortable expressing in class, please feel free to speak to me after class or send me an email.

Cell-phones

Please turn off your cell phones and other electronic devices during class time. Failure to do so may result in the lowering of your participation grade for the day. Do not text or answer calls. (If you have a job or other situation that requires you to be “on-call” during class time, please let me know at the beginning of the semester.)

Laptops

Laptops are only permitted for legitimate, course-related functions (e.g. taking notes). Any other use during class time may result in the lowering of your participation grade for the day.

Other Important Information

Disabilities Statement

Students with documented disabilities are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) if they wish to discuss any necessary academic accommodations.

Medical Emergency Statement

For medical emergencies, go to the nearest phone and call 911. All faculty offices have telephones and during normal business hours (8-12 and 1-4:30), the Sociology Office (Blair 3170) is open. Be sure to state the floor and room number of the emergency to the 911 operator. If possible, someone should go to the central entrance of Blair Hall to direct EMS personnel to the medical emergency scene. If the medical emergency is on the second or third floor, someone else should hold the elevator on the first floor for EMS use.

Tornado Statement

In case of a tornado warning, proceed to the center of the hallway on the first floor, near the posted severe weather signs. Under no circumstances should you attempt to leave the building.

Building Fire Statement

In case of fire, activate the fire alarm and exit the building. When a fire alarm sounds, everyone must exit the building and cannot re-enter the building until allowed by the building coordinator or fire department official. Fire alarms are located at the north and south ends of the corridors just inside the fire doors. The closes exits for all classrooms in Blair are on the north and south ends of the building. Under no circumstance should the elevator be used. Group assembly areas for all classes in Blair are either on the patio area between Blair and Old Main or on the southeast corner of the North Quad. As you exit the building, continue moving well away from the exits so that you do not impede the egress of other students or the work of fire officials. Move a safe distance away from the building.

Syllabus Disclaimer

The instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus as necessary over the course of the semester.

Course Schedule

UNIT 1: ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE EARLIEST HUMANS: INTRODUCING ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHOD AND THEORY

Text = The Mind in the Cave, by David Lewis-Williams

Week 1 (Aug. 20-24) – Archaeology and Anthropology

Area Topic: Our Early Human Ancestors

Thematic Topic: Archaeology, Dating, and Evolutionary Theory

READ: *The Mind in the Cave*, pgs. 7-68

IN CLASS: Sign up for archaeological research area

Week 2 (Aug. 27-31) – Doing Archaeology

Area Topic: Middle Paleolithic (Neandertals and other humans)

Thematic Topic: Archaeological Survey and Excavation

READ: *The Mind in the Cave*, pgs. 69-135

Additional Reading posted to Desire2Learn

DUE: Archaeologist Report (Friday, August 31)

Week 3 (Sept. 5-7) – Archaeological Interpretation

Sept. 3 – LABOR DAY – NO CLASS!!

Area Topic: Upper Paleolithic

Thematic Topic: Ethnographic Analogy and other Middle Range Theories

READ: *The Mind in the Cave*, pgs. 136-179

Week 4 (Sept. 10-14) – Art and Religion in the Ancient Past

Area Topic: Mesolithic Cultures

Thematic Topic: Shamanism and Artistic Expression

READ: *The Mind in the Cave*, pgs. 180-227

Additional Reading posted to Desire2Learn

DUE: Garbage Project (Friday, Sept. 14)

Week 5 (Sept. 17-21) – Domestication and Social Organization

Area Topic: Neolithic Cultures

Thematic Topic: The First Farmers

READ: *The Mind in the Cave*, pgs. 228-286

Additional Reading posted to Desire2Learn

IN CLASS: Test Review

EXAM 1 – Sept. 24 (Monday)

UNIT 2: OLD WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE STUDIES

Text = The Rape of the Nile, by Brian Fagan

Week 6 (Sept. 26-28) – Who Owns the Past?

Area Topic: Europe (Celts, Etruscans, Greeks, Romans, etc.)

Thematic Topic: Archaeology and Archaeological Stakeholders

READ: *The Rape of the Nile*, pgs. 1-62

Additional Reading posted to Desire2Learn

Week 7 (Oct. 1-3) – The First Archaeologists

Oct. 5 – FALL BREAK – NO CLASS!!

Area Topic: Mesopotamia (Uruk, Catal Hoyuk, Sumer, Babylon, etc.)

Thematic Topic: A Brief History of Archaeological Research

READ: *The Rape of the Nile*, pgs. 65-111

DUE: Project Background (Wednesday, Oct. 3)

Week 8 (Oct. 8-12) – Archaeology and Nationalism

Area Topic: Egypt (Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms)

Thematic Topic: Archaeology and Nationalism

READ: *The Rape of the Nile*, pgs. 113-150

Additional Reading posted to Desire2Learn

Week 9 (Oct. 15-19) – Archaeological Science and Archaeological Ethics

Area Topic: Africa (Great Zimbabwe, etc.)

Thematic Topic: Conducting Ethical Archaeology Today

READ: *The Rape of the Nile*, pgs. 153-204

DUE: Article Review (Friday, Oct. 19)

Week 10 (Oct. 22-26) – Archaeology and Tourism

Area Topic: Asia and the Near East (Mohenjo-daro, Angkor Wat, China, etc.)

Thematic Topic: Archaeology and Tourism

READ: *The Rape of the Nile*, pgs. 205-253

Additional Reading posted to Desire2Learn

IN CLASS: Test Review

EXAM 2 – Oct. 29 (Monday)

UNIT 3: NEW WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY: MYTH, MYSTERY, FACT, AND FICTION

Text = The Lost City of Z, by David Grann

Week 11 (Oct. 31-Nov. 2) – Peopling the Americas

Area Topic: Early Settlements in the Americas

Thematic Topic: Archaeological Explorations

READ: *The Lost City of Z*, pgs. 3-65

Additional Reading posted to Desire2Learn

Week 12 (Nov. 5-9) – Mystery of the “Moundbuilders”

Area Topic: Native North America (Cahokia, Moundville, Chaco Canyon, Ozette, etc.)

Thematic Topic: Archaeological Mysteries that Aren’t So Mysterious

READ: *The Lost City of Z*, pgs. 66-141

Additional Reading posted to Desire2Learn

DUE: Your Room in the Future (Friday, Nov. 9)

Week 13 (Nov. 12-16) – Contact and Colonialism

Area Topic: Mesoamerica (Olmec, Maya, Teotihuacan, Aztec, etc.)

Thematic Topic: The Impact of Conquest

READ: *The Lost City of Z*, pgs. 142-208

DUE: Research Paper Rough Draft (optional – Friday, Nov. 16)

THANKSGIVING BREAK – Nov. 19-23

Week 14 (Nov. 26-30) – High Altitude Civilizations

Area Topic: Andean South America (Tiwanaku, Inca, Moche, Nasca, etc.)

Thematic Topic: “White” Indians and Alien Spaceports

READ: *The Lost City of Z*, pgs. 209-257

Additional Reading posted to Desire2Learn

DUE: Research Paper Rough Draft (for Peer Review – Friday, Nov. 30)

IN CLASS: Research Paper Peer Review

Week 15 (Dec. 3-7) – Exploring the Amazon

Area Topic: Amazonian South America

Thematic Topic: Where is Z?

READ: *The Lost City of Z*, pgs. 258-319

DUE: Research Paper Final Draft (Friday, Dec. 7)

IN CLASS: Test Review

FINAL EXAM – Dec. 12 (Wed) – 2:45-4:45