Anth 4E03: Materiality, Matter, and Social Lives
Instructor: Shanti Morell-Hart <smorell@mcmaster.ca>

Class Meeting Location: Kenneth Taylor Hall, Room 105
Course Schedule: Fridays, Jan.6 - Mar.31, 11:30 - 14:20
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11:00 - 13:00
Office Location: Chester New Hall, Room 534

Course Description
How do we relate ourselves to a broader material world? How do we study this relationship? How do we consider human and non-human agencies? To what extent are human beings a discrete and special category, to what extent are we simply another form of assemblage that includes physical objects? How do we design objects; how do objects design us? How do we use objects; how do objects use us? How do these relationships change over time?

In this course, we will explore the relationship between humans and the material world, drawing from scholars in anthropology, archaeology, philosophy, geography, Indigenous Studies, engineering, and video game design. We will focus on the ways that the social world affects matter at different scales, and how the material world affects humanity at different scales. We will read works that address the social lives of people and things, considering sociality, spatiality, and virtual engagements. We will critically evaluate different modes of understanding materiality, and consider the impacts of materiality studies in other domains, from museum displays to the Internet of Things. Of particular focus will be the role of archaeology in constructing narratives of materiality, given the historic attention of the discipline to the study of societies, landscapes, and artifacts over the long durée.
The class is primarily a seminar, with discussions on assigned readings. These discussions will be complemented by small activities and field trips. You will be evaluated on consistent participation in class discussions (20%), a set of reading responses (30%), a final outline and paper (40%), and a final research presentation (10%).

**Textbooks and Required Readings:**
Most of the course readings will be posted online on Avenue to Learn. All of the required readings for each week-- with the exception of our very first meeting-- must be completed before the first class meeting of each week (i.e., due Thursday evenings by 8 pm).

**Course Requirements**
Our course meets once per week. Classes will be divided between discussions and activities. Your grade in the course will be based on your performance in completing the following assignments:

**Class participation: 20% of total grade.**
Class participation is based partially on attendance, and partially on contributions to discussion. You are expected to complete all of the required readings before each class. Attendance at all class meetings is expected, and is part of your grade calculation. It is necessary for you to participate in class discussion through substantive questions and comments in the classroom, and/or through posting to the online discussion forums. Online dialogue can be a response to previous postings, or the posting of a new discussion topic.

The goal of class discussion is to draw out your own interests in the course materials, and to regularly and critically engage you, along with your peers, with the central themes of the course.

*ALSO REQUIRED*: Feedback on the final presentation of one of your peers.

**Reading responses: 30% of total grade. Due each Thursday by 8 pm.**
You will be responsible for submitting a 400 word (roughly 1-page, double-spaced) response to one of the assigned readings the evening before the first class meeting of the week. These are to be posted on Avenue to Learn, before 8 pm, each Thursday evening. Individual readings will be divvied between class members for responses, but everyone is responsible for completing all of the assigned readings for each week's discussion.

Each reading response should include the following three sections.

*Basic information:*
- Full citation of the assigned reading at the very beginning of the response (author, year, publication, publisher, etc., following the SAA Style Guide: [http://www.saa.org/Portals/0/SAA/Publications/StyleGuide/StyleGuide_Final_813.pdf](http://www.saa.org/Portals/0/SAA/Publications/StyleGuide/StyleGuide_Final_813.pdf)
- A set of 5 keywords (list), just below the citation
- Identify the subject, the time period(s), and the location(s) of the study. (1 sentence)

*Assessment:*
- What do you think is the theoretical position of the author(s)? That is, what kinds of questions are the authors asking (e.g., ecological questions, ritual questions, questions of gender, etc.)? (1 sentence)
- What are the primary research objectives/thesis statements/questions asked of the data by the author(s)? That is, what specific questions are the authors asking? Is the author reacting to anything (e.g. missing information, outdated research, a contrary theoretical position)? (3 sentences)
- What types of materials/data/evidence are used to address these objectives? (1 sentence)
- What else would you like to see the author address? Where did the article fall short? (Short critique, or a request for more or different types of evidence.) (2 sentences)

- What questions do you have about the reading? (1-2 sentences)

- *OPTIONAL*: What are your suggestions for re-interpretation, using the same data set or material? How would you have done the study differently?

Reflection:

- What is one key thing you drew from this reading? (1 sentence)

- What does this make you reflect on-- in the news, your own daily practice, or your own experiences? (1-2 sentences)

The goal of these reading responses is prepare you for class discussion, with your personal and critical reflections on assigned material at the ready. A secondary goal is to leave you with a set of your own annotations on class readings.

Final paper: 40% of total grade.

Your final paper will be broken up into two components: paper outline and annotated bibliography (10%), and the final paper itself (30%). I will post a set of potential paper topics online, and circulate a copy in class.

Final paper outline and annotated bibliography: 10% of total grade. Due Friday, Mar. 3 by 8 pm.

This is a 2-page assignment that includes a 1-page (single-spaced) outline (roughly 250 words), and a 1-page (single-spaced) list of sources with a brief annotation for each source.

The outline must include: 1) your main thesis questions and objectives, 2) the general layout of your paper and structure of your argument, and 3) the contributions from source material you will be using. In your outline, the authors and dates of the readings you plan to cite will go in parentheses next to every applicable outline subheading. Provide a rough page number estimate for each major section of your paper.

On a separate page, provide an alphabetical list of 10 sources you will use in your paper: articles, book chapters, databases, and/or other scholarly materials. At least 5 of these readings must come from sources outside of assigned class readings. All of your sources should be scholarly in nature, and listed with full bibliographic reference information. Make sure to follow the SAA Style guide for your bibliographic information:


For each source, include a brief (1-sentence) description of how the material will contribute to your paper.

I will post an example of a final paper outline online, and talk over the template in class.

Final paper: 30% of total grade. Due Friday, April 7th by 8 pm.

This is a 3000 word narrative (roughly 10-pages, double-spaced, 12-pt font, 1-inch margins). Be sure to include a title page and bibliography on separate pages (and outside the word count). Again, you will need to use at least 10 sources, 5 of which must be outside of class readings.

I will post an example of the evaluation sheet I will use for your final paper online, and talk over the format in class, so that you have an idea of how to structure your paper.
After completing your final paper, please consider updating relevant Wikipedia articles on your paper topic(s), especially if you have chosen a more obscure topic with little or no information already on Wikipedia!

**Final Research Presentations: 10% of total grade. Final Examination period.**

Final research presentations will take place during the time scheduled for Final Examinations. You will need to prepare a short (5 min) PowerPoint (or similar) presentation. This will cover your research questions, analysis, and preliminary interpretations as you have prepared them for your final paper. Basically, condense the text of your paper into 1.5 pages, and then craft roughly 4 slides to graphically illustrate your research. The goal of the presentations is to make you conversant in your own hard work!

As a reminder: part of your Class Participation grade is providing feedback on the presentation of one of your peers.

**Expectations and General Guidelines:**

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<th>Verbal²</th>
<th>Definition²</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>Strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with literature</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>80-84</td>
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<td>Student who is profiting from his/her university experience; understanding of the subject matter, ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material</td>
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<td>Some evidence of familiarity with subject matter and some evidence that critical analytic skills have been developed</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Little evidence of even superficial understanding of subject matter, weakness in critical and analytic skills; with limited or irrelevant use of literature</td>
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[¹] See section on General Academic Regulations in McMaster University Undergraduate Calendar 2013/2014; [²] Definitions by University of Toronto Faculty of Arts and Science

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

**Academic Dishonesty:**
Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, Appendix 3, http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:
1. Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one’s own for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

In this course we will be using a software package designed to reveal plagiarism. Students will be required to submit their work electronically so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

**Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy:**
Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Email Forwarding in MUGSI:
http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html
*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link*

**Special Accommodations:**
If you have any special accommodations, such as additional resource requirements and/or adjustments to your schedule due to athletic events or religious holidays, send me an email detailing your needs within the first two weeks of the course. It is not necessary to explain the context or background— just describe your necessary accommodations clearly. Student Accessibility Services (linked below) can help to guide you in this process.

**Student Accessibility Services:**
Student Accessibility Services (SAS) supports students who have been diagnosed with a disability or disorder, such as a learning disability, ADHD, mental health diagnosis, chronic medical condition, sensory, neurological or mobility limitation. Students who require accommodation should contact SAS as early in the term as possible. http://sas.mcmaster.ca

**AODA**
If you require this information in an alternate/accessible format, please contact Delia Hutchinson at 905-525-9140 extension 24523 or email hutchin@mcmaster.ca
Office of Human Rights and Equity Services:  
McMaster recently launched MACcessibility, part of the Office of Human Rights and Equity Services, to help advance the University’s goal of building an inclusive community with a shared purpose. HRES works with campus and community partners to ensure that McMaster University is a place where all students, staff and faculty are treated equitably and respectfully in all areas of campus life.

http://www.mcmaster.ca/hres/index.html

Personal Counselling and Mental Health at the Student Wellness Center:  
If you believe that you are in imminent danger or that harm to yourself or someone else exists, immediately call the police for assistance. For other situations of emotional distress, please contact a health or wellness specialist. The SWC offers individual counselling at the SWC, group programming at the SWC, community referrals, crisis referrals, and connections to community/campus resources.

http://wellness.mcmaster.ca/counselling.html

Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work (MSAF):  
The University recognizes that students periodically require relief from academic work for medical or personal situations. In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work.”

The MSAF policy can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar under General Academic Regulations > Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work:

http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests_for_Relief_for_Missed_Academic_Term_Work

For missed academic work worth up to 25% of the course weight, use the MSAF mechanism to report absences due to medical or personal situations that last up to three calendar days. You may submit requests for relief using the MSAF only once per term. As per the policy, an automated email will be sent to the course instructor, who will determine the appropriate relief. It is your responsibility to immediately follow up with each of your instructors (normally within two working days) regarding the nature of the accommodation. Failure to do so may negate the relief.

https://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/index.html

If you are absent for more than 3 days, have missed academic work worth more than 25% of the final grade, or exceed one request per term you MUST visit your Associate Dean's Office. You may be required to provide supporting documentation. It is the prerogative of the instructor in each of your courses to determine the appropriate relief for missed term work.

Writing Support Services:  
If you need help researching, structuring, writing, or proofreading your paper, contact Writing Support Services early in the term and consult with them often. Trained upper-year and graduate Writing Assistants are available to provide help with particular assignments or specific questions related to academic writing.

http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/students/academic-skills/writing-support-services.html
**Research Help**
A Service Desk is located near the entrance of each library on campus. Students may drop by in person, call or email to get help finding library resources. Students may also get online research help by using the "Ask a Librarian" virtual reference service: [https://library.mcmaster.ca/justask](https://library.mcmaster.ca/justask)

**Research Consultations**
Faculty, students and staff who require in-depth information on resources may request a one-on-one consultation with a librarian. Before making a request, ask for help at one of the Service Desks. [https://library.mcmaster.ca/forms/research-consultation-request](https://library.mcmaster.ca/forms/research-consultation-request)

**Images from the top of the syllabus:**
- [http://myyearwithoutclothesshopping.com/attitudes-and-habits/3-articles-that-made-me-think/](http://myyearwithoutclothesshopping.com/attitudes-and-habits/3-articles-that-made-me-think/)
- [http://www.chaoscontrolmichigan.com/how-long-will-it-take](http://www.chaoscontrolmichigan.com/how-long-will-it-take)
Course Schedule:
(Reminder: You are responsible for a 400 word response to one of the assigned readings the evening before the first class meeting of the week.)

1. Jan.6: If a thing falls in a forest
   Read & Discuss: Daniel Miller (2005): “Materiality: An Introduction”

   **Thursday, Jan.12: First reading response due by 8 pm for Jan. 13 readings**
   (due every Thursday hereafter)

2. Jan.13: Stuff and nonsense

3. Jan.20: Things and blings
   Discuss: Appadurai 1994 [1986]; Coole and Frost 2010; Gerristen and Riello 2015; Graeber 2001 (Ch 4).

4. Jan.27: Media matters
   Sensing things. Physical properties: sound, taste, feel, etc. Sensory archaeologies and the privilege of the visual. Semiotics: representations, indices, and meanings. Copies, replicas, and citations.
   Workshop: Final paper topics

5. Feb.3: Time travel
   Materiality and temporality. Historical trajectories; historical contingencies. The shape and structure of time in relation to things and activities. Schrödinger’s cat vs. the vacuum.
   Discuss: Bailey 200; Burke et al. 2011; Foxhall 2000; Ingold 1993; Stahl 1993.

6. Feb.10: The I and the Not-I
   Workshop: Final papers and outlines

7. Feb.17: You are what you eat

** Winter Term Recess Feb.18 – Feb.26 **
8. Mar.3: Reduce, reuse, recycle
Durables and perishables; consumables and reusables. Heirloom objects and social memory. Replicas, recipes, and reconstructions. The Ship of Theseus paradox.

**Final Paper Outline due: Friday Mar.3 by 8 pm**

9. Mar.10: Conversations with landscape

10. Mar.17: Disaster!, Discard, and Abandonment
Discuss: Burström 2013; Crossland 2002; Fowles 2015; Reno 2013; Stevenson 1982.

11. Mar.24: Virtuality and materiality
Discuss: Champion 2011; Dudley 2012; Harrison and Schofield 2010; Morehart and Butler 2010; Socolovsky 2004.
Workshop: Final presentations

** Society for American Archeology annual meetings Mar.29-Apr.2 **

12. Mar.31 Materiality, meaning, multivocality
What are we conserving and curating? Preservation, curation, and posterity. “Real” objects vs. replicas. Authenticity and integrity. Heterotopias, multivocality, and original objects.
Activity: Artifact context and display in the McMaster Museum of Art

**Final Paper due on Friday, April 7th by 8 pm**

**Presentations during the Final Examination period: Upload to Avenue by 10 pm the night before**

NOTE: The annual Theoretical Archaeology Group meetings will be held May 18 - 20, at the University of Toronto:  http://www.archaeology.utoronto.ca/tag-toronto-2017.html


**Course Readings:**

Agarwal, Sabrina C.


Alberti, Benjamin and Yvonne Marshall


Appadurai, Arjun


Bailey, Geoff


Barrett, John C. and Ilhong Ko


Bath, Joyce E.


Bennett, Jane


Bollmer, Grant


Boyd, Brian


Brown, Bill


Burke, Heather, Alice Gorman, Ken Mayes and Darren Renshaw


Burström, Mats

Champion, Erik

Colwell-Chanthaphonh, Chip and Thomas J. Ferguson

Coole, Diana and Samantha Frost

Crossland, Zoë

Dudley, Sandra

Ferrando, Francesca

Foucault, Michel

Fowles, Severin M.

Foxhall, Lin

Gerritsen, Anne and Giorgio Riello

Graeber, David
Hamann, Byron Ellsworth  

Hamilakis, Yannis  
2008  Time, Performance, and the Production of a Mnemonic Record: From Feasting to an Archaeology of Eating and Drinking. *Proceedings of the 12th International Aegean Conference, University of Melbourne, Centre for Classics and Archaeology, 25-29 March 2008*.

Haraway, Donna  

Harmanşah, Ömür  

Harrison, Rodney and John Schofield  

Hodder, Ian  

Hoskins, Janet  

Hurcombe, Linda  

Ingold, Timothy  


Joyce, Arthur A and Sarah B Barber  

Joyce, Rosemary A.  

Kiddey, R., A. Daffnis, J. Hallam and M. Brate

Knappett, Carl

Latour, Bruno

2005 Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory. Oxford University Press, USA.

Lillios, Katina T.

Lippert, Dorothy

Lowenthal, David

Meskell, Lynn

Miller, Daniel

Mills, Barbara J.
2016 Communities of Consumption: Cuisines as Networks of Situated Practice. In Knowledge in Motion: Constellations of Learning Across Time and Place, edited by A. P. Roddick and A. B. Stahl, pp. 248-270. Amerind Studies in Anthropology (SAA-Amerind Series), University of Arizona Press, Tucson, AZ.

Morehart, Christopher T. and N. Butler

Nakamura, Carolyn and Peter Pels

Ouzman, Sven


Overton, Nick J. and Yannis Hamilakis

Reno, Joshua

Socolovsky, Maya

Soja, Edward W.

Stahl, Ann Brower

Stevenson, Marc G.

Taylor, Timothy F.

Wendrich, Willeke