

Anthropology 3DD3 - The Archaeology of Death

Instructor: Dr. Aubrey Cannon

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Office: Virtual Office

Classes: Wednesday 4:30-5:20, Thursday 3:30-5:20

Office hours: Zoom virtual office hours - Wednesday 1:30-2:30, or by appointment.

The archaeological study of human engagement with death and the dead. We will examine how treatments of the dead vary through context and circumstance, and how mortuary evidence is used to develop understandings of past cultures and their long-term histories. Readings and research projects focus on case studies to highlight different perspectives on mortuary evidence and its interpretation.

Classes: Will be scheduled synchronous seminars with lectures, question and answer sessions, and discussion of readings and assignments. The platform will be Zoom, with links for access located on Avenue to Learn. Classes will be recorded and posted on Avenue to Learn.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE VALUES:

Reading Assignments, Discussions and Debates	- 20 %
Case Study Reviews	- 30 %
Final Paper	- 50 %

Reading Assignments, Discussions and Debates: Points will be assigned for readings, prepared participation in class discussions related to the case study assignments, and prepared participation in in-class debates. The combined grade will be based on the points earned from the total number available.

Weekly reading assignments will consist of written notations on **each** of the week's assigned readings. Each notation will highlight at least one point of particular interest from the reading together with a very brief (2-3 sentence) explanation of why that point is of interest. The explanations may consist of critical commentaries or discussion of the implications of points raised in the reading. Notations may also include questions based on the reading. The written notations may be used as the basis for in-class discussion of the readings and the issues they raise. The notation on each reading will be worth one point toward a final total. Reading assignments are **due on the Tuesday by 11:30 pm** of the week for which the reading is assigned. Late assignments will be accepted for half value for up to one week past their due date, but will not be accepted beyond that point.

Preparation for a series of four debates will be worth the equivalent of three reading points each. Preparation for the debates will consist of a minimum of 3-4 typed points. Debates will be scheduled at intervals throughout the course and will focus on topics intrinsic to the study of mortuary archaeology.

Preparation for discussion of the articles assigned for Sept. 29-Oct. 1 (Mainfort 1985, Torres-Rouff et al. 2012) will require identification of the main goals, an outline of the main classes of mortuary evidence used in the study and a brief explanation of how the evidence is used to draw conclusions. This preparation will be worth the equivalent of six reading points. Regular reading notations are not required this week.

Case Study Reviews: The assignment will require the selection and critical review of two archaeological case studies incorporating different approaches to the analysis and interpretation of mortuary evidence. For each, you will be required to identify the theoretical approach, the specific goals of the study, its analyses of the evidence, the main conclusions and the validity and effectiveness of the

arguments in support of those conclusions. A detailed outline of this assignment will be provided.

Final Paper: The final paper will be a research proposal for the re-analysis and re-interpretation of an excavated cemetery site. The proposal will draw on everything learned from the overall course content to outline and explain how alternative approaches could be applied to the analysis and interpretation of the mortuary data. The proposal will not be an exhaustive review of all possible alternatives, but will be a well-developed application of ideas and analytical or interpretive approaches examined in the course, toward the goal of developing an understanding of a past culture and its history from its mortuary remains. A detailed outline of this assignment will be provided.

Late Assignments: Penalty deductions of 1% of the COURSE grade per day late apply to all late and missed assignments unless an MSAF is submitted.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness: Please use an MSAF to cover missed work that is worth less than 25% of your grade. An MSAF exception can be requested through your faculty office for work worth greater than 25% (with appropriate documentation).

Avenue to Learn: In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

WEEKLY TOPICS AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Sept. 9-10: Introduction.

Approaches to the Archaeology of Death

Sept. 16-17: Thinking historically, analytically and contextually about the dead. (Binford 1971, Kroeber 1927, Hodder 1980)

Sept. 23-24: Treatment of the dead as process, symbol and history. (Chapman 1981, Hodder 1984, Thomas 2016)

Sept. 29-Oct. 1: Analytical and interpretive studies of the dead. (Mainfort 1985, Torres-Rouff et al. 2012)

Oct. 7-8: Thinking emotionally and interpretively about the dead. (Hill 2013, Joyce 2001)

Oct. 14-15: Mid-term recess.

Oct. 21-22: Thinking relationally about the dead. (Fowler 2013:219-255)

Structured Patterns of the Dead

Oct. 28-29: Places for the dead. (Joyce 2011, Littleton and Allen 2007, Parker Pearson 1993)

Nov. 4-5: Placement of the dead. (Brown 1993, Chapman 2000, Snodgrass 2016)

Nov 11-12: Identities of the dead. (Brück 2004, Chunga and Castillo Butters 2015, Sørensen 2004)

Nov. 18-19: Physical interaction with the dead. (Croucher 2012:94-117, Hanna et al. 2012, Smith and Pérez Arias 2015)

Nov. 25-26: Spiritual interaction with the dead. (Harrington 2013:1-27, Headrick 2007:44-71, Toyne 2015)

Archaeological Histories of the Dead

Dec. 2-3: Archaeological histories of the dead. (Keswani 2005, Quinn 2015, Stevenson 2016)

Dec. 9: Pattern and change in mortuary practice.

READINGS

Note: Readings marked POSTED will be available for download from Avenue to Learn.

Binford, Lewis R.

1971 Mortuary Practices: Their Study and Their Potential. In *Approaches to the Social Dimensions of Mortuary Practices*, edited by James A. Brown, pp. 6-29. *Memoirs of the Society for American Archaeology* No. 25. Washington, D.C. https://www-jstor-org.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/stable/25146709?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

Brown Ian W.

1993 The New England Cemetery as a Cultural Landscape. In *History from Things: Essays on Material Culture*, edited by Steven Lubar and W. David Kingery, pp. 140-159. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press. POSTED

Brück, Joanna

2004 Material Metaphors: The Relational Construction of Identity in Early Bronze Age Burials in Ireland and Britain. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 4:307-333. https://journals-scholarsportal-info.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/details/14696053/v04i0003/307_mm.xml

Chapman, John

2000 Tension at Funerals: Social Practices and the Subversion of Community Structure in Later Hungarian Prehistory. In *Agency in Archaeology*, edited by Marcia-Anne Dobres and John E. Robb, pp. 169-195. London: Routledge. POSTED

Chapman, Robert

1981 The Emergence of Formal Disposal Areas and the 'Problem' of Megalithic Tombs in Prehistoric Europe. In *The Archaeology of Death*, edited by Robert Chapman, Ian Kinnes and Klavs Randsborg, pp. 71-81. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. POSTED

Chunga, Carlos Rengifo and Luis Castillo Butters

2015 The Construction of Social Identity: Tombs of Specialists at San José de Moro, Jequetepeque Valley, Perú. In *Funerary Practices and Models in the Ancient Andes: The Return of the Living Dead*, edited by Peter Eeckhout and Lawrence S. Owens, pp. 117-136. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. POSTED

Croucher, Karina

2012 *Death and Dying in the Neolithic Near East*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. POSTED

Fowler, Chris

2013 *The Emergent Past: A Relational Realist Archaeology of Early Bronze Age Mortuary Practices*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. POSTED

Hanna, Jayd, Abigail S. Bouwman, Keri A. Brown, Mike Parker Pearson, and Terence A. Brown

2012 Ancient DNA Typing shows that a Bronze Age Mummy is a Composite of Different Skeletons. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 39:2774-2779. https://journals-scholarsportal-info.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/details/03054403/v39i0008/2774_adtstaiacods.xml

Harrington, Nicola

2013 *Living with the Dead: Ancestor Worship and Mortuary Ritual in Ancient Egypt*. Oxford: Oxbow. POSTED

Headrick, Annabeth

2007 *The Teotihuacan Trinity: The Sociopolitical Structure of an Ancient Mesoamerican City*. Austin: University of Texas Press. POSTED

Hill, Erica

2013 Death, Emotion, and the Household among the Late Moche. In *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial*, edited by Sarah Tarlow and Liv Nilsson Stutz, pp. 597-616. Oxford: Oxford University Press. POSTED

Hodder, Ian

1980 Social Structure and Cemeteries: A Critical Appraisal. In *Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries*, edited by Philip Rahtz, Tania Dickinson, and Lorna Watts, pp. 161-169. British Archaeological Reports vol. 82. Oxford: BAR. POSTED

Hodder, Ian

1984 Burials, Houses, Women and Men in the European Neolithic. In *Ideology, Power and Prehistory*, edited by Daniel Miller and Christopher Tilley, pp. 51-68. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. POSTED

Joyce, Rosemary A.

2001 Burying the Dead at Tlatilco: Social Memory and Social Identities. In *Social Memory, Identity, and Death: Anthropological Perspectives on Mortuary Rituals*, edited by Meredith S. Chesson, pp. 12-26. Archeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association, No. 10. Arlington, Virginia. https://journals-scholarsportal-info.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/details/1551823x/v10i0001/12_btdatsmasi.xml

Joyce, Rosemary A.

2011 In the Beginning: The Experience of Residential Burial in Prehispanic Honduras. In *Residential Burial: A Multiregional Exploration*, edited by Ron L. Adams and Stacie M. King, pp. 33-43. Archeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association Vol. 20. https://journals-scholarsportal-info.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/details/1551823x/v20i0001/33_3tbteorbiph.xml

Keswani, Priscilla Schuster

2005 Death, Prestige, and Copper in Bronze Age Cyprus. *American Journal of Archaeology* 109:341-401. https://www-jstor-org.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/stable/40026118?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

Kroeber, A.L.

1927 Disposal of the Dead. *American Anthropologist* 29:308-315. <https://anthrosourceonlinelibrary-wiley-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/doi/10.1525/aa.1927.29.3.02a00090>

Littleton, Judith and Harry Allen

2007 Hunter-gatherer Burials and the Creation of Persistent Places in Southeastern Australia. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 26:283-298. https://journals-scholarsportal-info.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/details/02784165/v26i0002/283_hbatcoppisa.xml

Mainfort, Robert C.

1985 Wealth, Space, and Status in a Historic Indian Cemetery. *American Antiquity* 50:555-579.

Parker Pearson, Mike

1993 The Powerful Dead: Archaeological Relationships between the Living and the Dead.

Cambridge Archaeological Journal 3:203-229. <https://www-cambridge-org.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/core/journals/cambridge-archaeological-journal/article/powerful-dead-archaeological-relationships-between-the-living-and-the-dead/E32BD9EFC07AE2F776002722AF29A1E9>

Quinn, Colin P.

2015 Returning and reuse: Diachronic perspectives on multi-component cemeteries and mortuary politics at Middle Neolithic and Early Bronze Age Tara, Ireland. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 37:1–18. https://journals-scholarsportal-info.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/details/02784165/v37icomplete/1_rardpoaebati.xml

Sørensen, Marie Louise Stig

2004 Stating Identities: The Use of Objects in Rich Bronze Age Graves. In *Explaining Social Change: Studies in Honour of Colin Renfrew*, edited by John Cherry, Chris Scarre, and Stephen Shennan, pp. 167-176. Cambridge: MacDonald Institute for Archaeological Research. POSTED

Smith, Scott C. and Maribel Pérez Arias

2015 From Bodies to Bones: Death and Mobility in the Lake Titicaca Basin, Bolivia. *Antiquity* 89:106-121. <https://www-cambridge-org.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/core/journals/antiquity/article/from-bodies-to-bones-death-and-mobility-in-the-lake-titicaca-basin-bolivia/C9001A34E11B5F1C726D800EAEA12D1C>

Snodgrass, Anthony

2016 Putting Death in Its Place: The Idea of the Cemetery. In *Death Rituals, Social Order and the Archaeology of Immortality in the Ancient World*, edited by Colin Renfrew, Michael J. Boyd and Iain Morley, pp. 187-199. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. POSTED

Stevenson, Alice

2016 Locating a Sense of Immortality in Early Egyptian Cemeteries. In *Death Rituals, Social Order and the Archaeology of Immortality in the Ancient World*, edited by Colin Renfrew, Michael J. Boyd and Iain Morley, pp. 371-381. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. POSTED

Thomas, Julian

2016 House Societies and Founding Ancestors in Early Neolithic Britain. In *Death Rituals, Social Order and the Archaeology of Immortality in the Ancient World*, edited by Colin Renfrew, Michael J. Boyd and Iain Morley, pp. 138-150. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. POSTED

Torres-Rouff, Christina, William J. Pestle, and Blair M. Daverman

2012 Commemorating Bodies and Lives at Kish's 'A Cemetery': (Re)presenting Social Memory. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 12:193–219. https://journals-scholarsportal-info.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/details/14696053/v12i0002/193_cbalakcsm.xml

Toyne, J. Marla

2015 Ritual Violence and Human Offerings at the Temple of the Sacred Stone, Túcume, Peru. In *Living with the Dead in the Andes*, edited by, Izumi Shimada and James L. Fitzsimmons, pp. 172-

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour 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. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.

improper collaboration in group work.

copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster’s use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

ONLINE PROCTORING

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information,

consult McMaster University's Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities policy.

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): 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".

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, including lectures by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.