TEACHING ON(THE)LINE
ERIN MCGUIRE, DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Art: Juha Halme - @juhahalme - https://www.artstation.com/artwork/ANN5e
With respect, I acknowledge the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. I live and currently work on Songhees territory.
Welcome to ANTH398!

Raiders and Traders, Pirates and Farmers – The Vikings colour our view of the Middle Ages in a multitude of ways. The course takes a detailed look at the nature and impact of the Viking expansion in the North Atlantic (including Scotland & the British Isles, the Faroes, Iceland, Greenland and North America) in the period defined rather broadly from c.800-1300 AD. A key focus of the course will be on materials and objects of the Viking Age, which we will explore through artifact studies and experimental archaeology. In addition to developing critical thinking skills, students will build on written and oral communication skills.

Instructor: Dr Erin McGuire, Department of Anthropology (profile); personal webpage
### STRUCTURE

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### My goals?

- Multiple opportunities for formative feedback
- Not putting too much weight on any single assignment
- On-going engagement throughout the 7 weeks
  - Ensuring students did some of the readings
A REALITY CHECK

- Workload Estimator 2.0 (Wake Forest University)
  - https://cat.wfu.edu/resources/tools/estimator2/
  - Total? 69 hours/week!
EXAMPLE: DISCUSSION FORUMS

“ONE POST AND TWO REPLIES”
EXAMPLE: DISCUSSION FORUMS

Asynchronous online discussions promote learning (Comer & Lenaghan 2013)

Too much instructor involvement detracts from learning (Comer & Lenaghan 2013)

Student learning is related to level of engagement, rather than quantity (Koskey & Kushner Benson 2017)

But students may not voluntarily interact (An, Shin, & Lim 2009)

My assignment

Each week, there will be a forum in which you are expected to post. It is your responsibility to complete the forum activity before midnight each Sunday. The earlier you do the work, the less stressful it will be.

Respond to one key question from the list (400-600 words).

Post a minimum of two replies.

Uh oh….  

- Where did I go wrong?
- Can you spot the problem areas? Take a look and post one of the things you see in the zoom chat. It’s ok if someone else says it before you.

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My assignment – more details

A simple summary answer that cites at least one of the relevant academic articles will tick the box for completion, but if you are seeking to excel in this activity, be sure to demonstrate critical thinking. You can do this in a number of ways, including linking together ideas from multiple sources, clearly explaining your own ideas and the evidence that underlies them, and/or connecting between multiple course themes.
Re: What is privileged in our interpretations and imaginations? Is the warrior the top of the social ladder

Primary Post

When we speak of “warrior” we must consider representation meaning and the contextual sociopolitical environment of representation. “Warrior” from a hegemonic perspective is symbolic of leadership and power (Raffield, 2019, p. 819). If “warrior” equates to “leader” the opposite, “follower” reveals the difference and absence of unbiased binaries. There is the dominant and the subordinate. Binary meanings are shaped by contrast thereby creating power relationships. The meaning attached to “warrior” to those in 9th century Birka, 13th century Iceland, early 20th century and the present-day western world is unlikely to be the same. The sociopolitical systems are central to how representations are interpreted. This contextual representation of “warrior” is not fixed as its meaning has been challenged and changed over time (Riad, 2011, p. 834). When contemplated through these systems, fluctuating traditional identities can create dialogue which aims to shift binaries. However, affirming women, for example, as powerful on domestic fronts amounts to a “…simple reversal in power relations…” and does little to displace entrenched binaries (Riad, 2011, p. 835).

Consider the characterization of power as a subjugating force, one in which an individual is dominated by another (Foucault, 1982, p. 781). This brings us back to representation context and whose power is truly being represented. The ethics change from pagan beliefs to Christianity is fundamental to representation meaning and context binaries (Foucault, 1982, p. 783). This power change influence an interpretation emphasized the domination-subjugation relationship between the Church and its followers. Centuries of built up systems to enforce this masculine-feminine dichotomy are only recently being reexamined.

Cleopatra is one example of a historical figure illustrating this subjection. Cleopatra, an exceptional figure in history, whose leadership and sphere of influence defied hegemonic Roman societal norms has endured a changing persona overtime (Riad, 2011, p. 836). Cultural productions of her character have done little to represent her as she may have identified but rather as a threat, an enigma or as pathetically dependent on more powerful men. Is it possible to reexamine her in light of representation context? How would she conceive herself? Perhaps as living god(dess), equating herself as the embodiment of leadership and power. This representation no longer contains adverse linguistic descriptors and subverts the binary either/or.

Perhaps there were extraordinary individuals in the Viking Age who also transcended the binary dichotomy. Clover proposed the one gender model where attributes can coexist (Clover, 1993, p. 13). Although we can only speculate on how they identified, there must have been females who subverted, from our perspective, their difference and power restrictions of the domestic sphere. Perhaps they even used their bodies as power to glide between martial and martial environments. Here we can ask about representation and meaning in burial contexts. What do material culture of the warrior model, such as battle equipment and game boards, speak of? Must the antithetical concepts of woman and warrior be ascribed to the binary or can a paradoxical gendered power in leadership be reconciled where power transcends the masculine-feminine?

If so, we must reexamine the sociopolitical representations and acknowledge what facilitates power. Status likely provided mostly elite individuals with the potential to ascend to positions of power. However, Viking la may have allowed individuals from lower social classes and women to gain access to power (Raffield et al., 2016, pp. 39, 40). Migrations during the Viking Age allowed individuals to travel to distant lands where they acquired knowledge, expertise and strategic skill. These factors show the potential for marginalized individuals to rise above their difference to become leaders. We must go beyond contextualizing Viking Age individuals as we would understand them by today’s standards and enrich the representational meaning of the word “warrior” to be versatile and paradoxical.

References


What have I done????

CITATIONS ERROR:
SEE MY COMMENTS
SOME IDEAS

Open up the questions

Rubrics are a wonder

Have students select & submit their best work
Be explicit about expectations.
Provide early opportunities for feedback from students.
But most of all, do less.
- Be kind to ourselves and our students
- Be calm when things don’t work out the way you expect
- Be safe and take care of your mental health

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