

ANTH 397: Archaeology of Death

DEAD (WO)MEN DO TELL TALES

Instructor:	Dr E McGuire	e-mail:	ehalstad@uvic.ca [Please see email policy below]
Office:	Cornett B225	Office Hours:	Weds 3-4pm or by appointment
Dates:	Sep 9 - Dec 4	TA:	Katrina Kosyk - kckosyk@uvic.ca [Please see email policy below]
Time:	TWF 9:30-10:20		
CRN:	10097	Location:	COR B107

Course description

The dead are all around us. Yet they are not silent. They built the house I am sitting in now; they founded the University at which we study. The dead are constantly invoked and recycled in daily life, this much is true. And yet, what can the actual treatment of the dead, the death and mortuary behaviour of a society, tell us about the living? Some societies do not bury their dead: can an absence of evidence tell us anything about a society's beliefs? The first burials in the history of humanity are often said to herald the "origins of symbolism, ritual and religion" (Parker Pearson, 1999, p.147). But is burial any more than a practical means of getting rid of a body? This course explores themes and issues in the study of mortuary practices. Topics and case studies will include ethical issues, gender and identity, social organisation and structure, spirituality etc... The time range that we will cover in the course will span from the Neolithic to the 20th century, and numerous cultures from all parts of the globe will be our subject matter.



Detail of grave monument from Greyfriars Kirk, Orkney

Aims

The aims of this course are:

- To investigate funerary in the archaeological record through the use of cross-cultural case studies;
- To outline theoretical and interpretative approaches to mortuary archaeology;
- To explore issues of ethics and respect in relation to the study of funerary remains; and
- To challenge notions of legitimate knowledge and identify and explore alternative agendas.

Learning objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

1. Identify and discuss various types of funerary rituals and their archaeological expression;
2. Assess the contribution archaeology makes to interpreting the ways that societies respond to death;
3. Recognise, describe, apply and analyze a range of different interpretative stances used in the archaeological study of funerary remains;
4. Apply anthropological terminology and methods to the written expression of an argument analysing archaeological approaches to the study of funerary remains;
5. Discuss the ethical considerations that apply to the archaeological study of funerary remains;
6. Critically evaluate a case study as a tool for analysing theoretical perspectives; and
7. Effectively utilise technological resources for presenting archaeological materials, including research, article reviews, mapping and cemetery survey.

Course requirements

This course includes a combination of lectures, discussions, and group work. The nature of the assignments means that regular attendance is essential, as is completion of the assigned readings. Because of the nature of the group assignments you will sometimes be given class time to work within your groups.

Textbook

- No official textbook
- Required reading materials will be available in the library or on CourseSpaces.

- Useful, but not required: Parker Pearson, M. (1999) *The Archaeology of Death and Burial*. Sutton: Stroud. [Check SUBText for used copies!]

Grading Scale

We will be using the standard UVic Undergraduate Grading Scale, as can be seen here: <http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2012/FACS/UnIn/UARe/Grad.html>

In particular, I draw your attention to the criteria required for grades within the A range (A- to A+): “Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.”

Therefore, B range grades are assigned to students who fulfill all expectations, while A range grades must be reserved for those who exceed them.

Assessment

This course involves a lot of work. Most of it can be managed by budgeting time to work on your assignments every week. You will be allocated some class time for your group assignments but, as with any course, you should expect to be working for about 6 hours/week outside the class. Don’t let yourself fall behind. It becomes difficult to catch up.

Forum Assignments	15%	See details
Data Assignment	10%	Sep 30
Monument Analysis (Group portion)	10%	Oct 17
Monument Analysis (Individual portion)	15%	Oct 20 (or earlier)
Digital Archaeology Assignment: Proposal	P/F	Nov 1 (or earlier; must pass to
Digital Archaeology Assignment: Final	25%	Nov 27
Take Home Exam	25%	Dec 4

Individual Assignments

Forum Assignments (15%)

For each week of the course, there will be a forum posted on the CourseSpaces site. You must make meaningful contributions to at least five separate weeks and make a minimum of six posts to earn marks for this component of the course. Each forum will have at least two threads for you to choose from. Thread types will include: relevant news, article critiques, and course reflections. See CourseSpaces for more details.

Data Assignment (10%)

We will spend two classes working in a computer lab (early Sept). You will be given a dataset to manipulate and a worksheet to complete. The worksheet will be due a short time after the second lab session (Sept 24). The purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to core skills relating to data management and manipulation, helping establish skills required for the monument analysis and reading assignments.

Take Home Exam (25%)

The final exam will be in essay format and will be due on Dec 4th. You will be given the exam questions two weeks in advance. Details will be given in class and on CourseSpaces.

Group Assignments

Memorial Monument Analysis (10% +15%)

Students will work in groups to create a digital record of a set of graves or monuments. The record will include a database, map, photos, and transcriptions of each inscription included in the set. Students will form groups of 4 or 5 for this assignment. Each group will need to do some fieldwork on sites selected by students. Possibilities include, but are not limited to: segments of Ross Bay Cemetery, Pioneer's Square, the Veterans' Cemetery, memorial benches in Oak Bay etc... The assignment is broken into two parts for assessment. The digital record is a group project and is worth 10%. In addition to the digital record, each student will write a short essay based on their analysis. These essays are individual projects and are worth a further 15%. Further details will be available on CourseSpaces.

Digital Public Archaeology (25%) and Proposal (P/F)

Archaeologists do archaeological research in order to investigate the human past. The information gathered is part of a collective past, and may therefore be considered publicly and collectively owned (although, there are instances where archaeological data may belong to specific populations!). One of the challenges faced by archaeologists is actually communicating archaeological research to broader, non-academic audiences.

For this assignment, student groups will select an archaeological topic and present it in a digital, on-line format, such as a blog, website, wiki, magazine, etc. In addition to the final product, groups need to produce a proposal for their project. Proposals that are not accepted must be resubmitted before embarking on the project itself. Further details will be made available via CourseSpaces.

Course policies

Group Work Policy

Group work is important in this course. You cannot opt out of the group work. You'll find that this is generally the case in life. Humans are a group-oriented species and much of our lives depend on working well with others. The skills you acquire through working with others in this course are transferable to other group situations. Group projects are not about making my marking easier - they really don't help that way. They are about developing skills. If you do run into difficulties with your group, I ask that you try to resolve them within the group first. If that doesn't work, you can come to me. You will need to document your attempts to solve the issues, for instance by showing evidence of conversations in your group's designated CourseSpaces forum.

Email Policy

Most of the time, you can expect a reply to an email within 24-48 hours. Please do NOT expect an immediate reply. You should also know that I will only rarely reply to emails on the weekends. Moreover, there are limited issues that I will deal with over email - general administrative business, quick questions regarding class assignments etc. I will not answer bigger questions over email (such as questions about your marks, problems within your groups or course content questions while working on group papers). Please visit me during office hours or make an appointment to see me. Make sure you include the course code (ANTH 397) in your subject line, along with the subject of your message, otherwise your email may skip my inbox and be rejected as junk mail. Finally, before emailing me a question, check the CourseSpaces, syllabus, assignment guidelines and announcements - the answer to your question may already be there.

Late Assignments

Assignments are to be submitted to CourseSpaces by the start of the class on the due date unless otherwise noted. If you are unable to attend the class the day that something is due, you must still submit your assignment. All late assignments will be penalised by 10% per day, including weekends and holidays, to a maximum of 5 days. Assignments more than 5 days late will not be marked. Extensions will only be granted by prior arrangement or upon receipt of a medical note.

Academic Integrity

The University of Victoria does not tolerate academic misconduct, and the policies of the University will be upheld in this course. The Policy on Academic Integrity can be found in the University of Victoria Calendar.

Equity in the classroom

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive, supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members [Senate resolution, January 13th, 1999]. As part of our commitment to equity, the Department of Anthropology has established an Equity Committee. If you have concerns regarding equity issues in the classroom, you may contact a member of the Equity committee or the Chair of the Department. The Department Secretary can provide you with the names of the current members of this committee.

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Resource Centre for Students with a Disability (RCSd) as soon as possible. The RCSd staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations: <http://rcsd.uvic.ca/>. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Course Experience Surveys (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term you will have the opportunity to complete a confidential course experience survey (CES) regarding your learning experience. The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. When it is time for you to complete the survey, you will receive an email inviting you to do so. If you do not receive an email invitation, you can go directly to <http://ces.uvic.ca>. You will need to use your UVic NetLink ID to access the survey, which can be done on your laptop, tablet or mobile device. I will remind you nearer the time, but please be thinking about this important activity, especially the following three questions, during the course.

1. What strengths did your instructor demonstrate that helped you learn in this course?
2. Please provide specific suggestions as to how the instructor could have helped you learn more effectively.
3. Please provide specific suggestions as to how this course could be improved.

Student Success Tips

Your success at UVic is important to the Department of Anthropology. Familiarize yourself with the language of the campus: <http://www.registrar.uvic.ca/recruiting/vocabulary-large.html> for more information and refer to the Academic Calendar as well: <http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2010/>.

Resources:

The University of Victoria makes available an array of student-centred resources to help you achieve your academic goals. For example, the Learning Skills Program has online and in-person advice about all aspects of the educational environment, including: note-taking, study skills, thinking critically, and preparing for and writing examinations. I highly recommend making use of these resources. Importantly, peer-counselling is also available. For additional information:

The Learning Commons: <http://www.uvic.ca/library/locations/home/learning/>
 Centre for Academic Communication:
<http://www.uvic.ca/learningandteaching/home/home/centre/>
 Peer Help: <http://web.uvic.ca/~peerhelp/>

Tentative schedule of themes, readings and course assignments

This list is approximate: the dates are based on the week, not on specific class days. The CourseSpaces site will tell you by which days each specific reading must be completed. The length of class topics may be adjusted to support in-class discussions and activities. The reading list is also tentative, pending receipt of the requested articles by the library. All readings not contained in your course text will be made available through reserve or on CourseSpaces. Please be aware that this is a short list - it will be expanded. You can anticipate reading at least two academic papers per week in addition to your textbook.

Week	Topic & Readings ¹	Important Dates
1 Sep 9, 11	Intro to course Theoretical approaches to death Part 1: Morris, I. (1991) The Archaeology of Ancestors: The Saxe/Goldstein Hypothesis Revisited. Cambridge Archaeological Journal: 1(2): 147-169. Chapman, R. (2013) Death, burial, and social representation. In S. Tarlow and L. Nilsson Stutz (eds) The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 47-57.	

¹ There are two academic papers per week. This is a reasonable amount of reading, but is carefully planned to not be excessive. If you are struggling with your readings, please talk to Dr McGuire. Optional readings are in *[square brackets]*. These readings are not mandatory, but will help you to better understand the subject, may be useful for assignments, and may be valuable for the final exam.

<p>2 Sep 15, 16, 18</p>	<p>Theoretical approaches to death Part 2: McKinley, J.I. (2013) Contextualising grave goods: Theoretical perspectives and methodological implications. In S. Tarlow and L. Nilsson Stutz (eds) The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 173-192.</p> <p>Williams, H. and D. Sayer (2009) 'Halls of mirrors': Death and identity in medieval archaeology. In D. Sayer and H. Williams (eds) Mortuary Practices and Social Identities in the Middle Ages. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press: 1-22.</p>	
<p>3/4 Sep 22, 23, 25 Sep 29, 30, Oct 2</p>	<p>Data Assignment workshops Lab: HSD A170</p> <p>Students will sign up on CourseSpaces to attend labs on either Tuesdays or Wednesdays for these two weeks. Please make sure to sign up quickly to avoid disappointment. Lab: CLE A102</p> <p>Fridays will be open drop-in for students having difficulties or needing the lab space. Lab: CLE A012</p>	<p>Data assignment due 11:55 pm on Sep 30 <i>Sep 22: Last day for 100% fees return</i> <i>Sep 25: Last date for adding courses</i></p>
<p>5 Oct 6, 7, 9</p>	<p>Landscapes of death: Maldonado, A. (2011) What Does Early Christianity Look Like? Mortuary archaeology and conversion in Late Iron Age Scotland. Scottish Archaeological Journal 33(1-2): 39-54.</p> <p>Stewart, D.J. (2006) Gravestones and Monuments in the Maritime Cultural Landscape: Research Potential and Preliminary Interpretations. International Journal of Nautical Archaeology 36(1): 112-124.</p>	

<p>6 Oct 13, 14, 16</p>	<p>Treatment of the dead 1:</p> <p>Høilund Nielsen, K. (2009) Rituals to free the spirit - or what the cremation pyre told. In D. Sayer and H. Williams (eds) Mortuary Practices and Social Identities in the Middle Ages. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press: 1-22.</p> <p>Williams, H. 2004. Death Warmed Up: the agency of bodies and bones in early Anglo-Saxon cremation rites. Journal of Material Culture 9(3): 263-91.</p>	<p>Due Oct 17: Group Portion of Monument analysis</p> <p>Due Oct 20: Individual Portion of Monument analysis</p> <p>In-class time for Proposal drafting/editing <i>Oct 13: Last day for 50% fees</i></p>
<p>7 Oct 20, 21, 23</p>	<p>Treatment of the dead 2:</p> <p>Finn, C. (2006) Bog bodies and Bog Lands: Trophies of Science, Art and the Imagination. In I. Russell, (ed) Images, Representations and Heritage Moving beyond Modern Approaches to Archaeology. Springer-Kluwer, NY: 315-332.</p> <p>Film Oct 23: The Perfect Corpse</p>	<p>Due Nov 1: Case study proposal</p>
<p>8 Oct 27, 28, 30</p>	<p>Status:</p> <p>Lopez Castro, J.L. (2006) Colonials, merchants and alabaster vases: The western Phoenician aristocracy. Antiquity 80(307): 74-88.</p> <p>Robb, J., R. Bigazzi, L. Lazzarini, C. Scarsini, and F. Sonogo (2001) Social "status" and biological "status": A comparison of grave goods and skeletal indicators from Pontecagnano. Physical Anthropology 113(3): 213-222.</p>	<p><i>Oct 31: Last day to drop courses</i></p>

<p>9 Nov 3, 4, 6</p>	<p>Gender/Life-cycle: [Gilchrist, R. (2000) Archaeological biographies: realizing human lifecycles, -courses and -histories. World Archaeology 31(3): 325-328.]</p> <p>Sofaer Derevenski, J. (2000) Rings of Life: The role of metalwork in mediating the gendered life course. World Archaeology 31: 389-406.</p> <p>Sofaer, J and M.L. Stig Sørensen (2013) Death and gender. In S. Tarlow and L. Nilsson Stutz (eds) The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 527-541.</p> <p>[Waterman, A. J. and Thomas, J. T. (2011), When the bough breaks: Childhood Mortality and Burial Practice in Late Neolithic Atlantic Europe. Oxford Journal of Archaeology, 30: 165-183.]</p>	
<p>10 Nov 13</p>	<p>Kinship: Howell, Todd L. and Keith W. Kintigh (1996) Archaeological identification of kin groups using mortuary and biological data: an example from the American Southwest. American Antiquity 61(3): 537-554.</p>	<p>Reading Break (Nov 9-11)</p>
<p>11 Nov 17, 18, 20</p>	<p>Osteology and forensics Guest Talks Nov 17: Guest talk: TBA Nov 18: Guest talk: Thea Lamoureux Nov 20: Guest talk: TBA</p>	

<p>12 Nov 24, 25, 27</p>	<p>Politics of death: Scarre, G. (2013) ‘Sapient trouble-tombs’?: Archaeologists’ moral obligations to the dead. In S. Tarlow and L. Nilsson Stutz (eds) The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 665-675.</p> <p>Watkins, J. (2013) How ancients become ammunition: Politics and ethics of the human skeleton. In S. Tarlow and L. Nilsson Stutz (eds) The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 695-708.</p>	<p>Due Nov 27: Project, 11:55pm</p>
<p>13 Dec 1, 2, 4</p>	<p>Social Memory and Personhood Wilson, G.D. (2010) Community, Identity, and Social Memory at Moundville. American Antiquity 75(1): 3-18</p> <p>Williams, Howard (2005) Keeping the dead at arm's length: Memory, weaponry and early medieval mortuary technologies. Journal of Social Archaeology 5(2):253-275.</p>	
<p>Exam</p>	<p>Take home exam. Details on Course Spaces.</p>	