Archaeological Theory (3240:400)
Spring 2012

Instructor: Prof. Timothy Matney
Office: Olin 241, 972-6892, matney@uakron.edu
Office Hours: MW 2:00-3:00pm, or by appointment
Homepage: http://gozips.uakron.edu/~matney

Class Meetings: MWF 8:50-9:40am
Classroom: Olin 127

Prerequisite
Introduction to Archaeology (3240:100)

Course Description
All archaeological fieldwork and interpretation involves the use of theory. Even such seemingly straightforward activities as determining where to dig involves the use of theoretical constructs, although we may not always make them explicit. This course is an advanced undergraduate seminar covering the history of scientific archaeological exploration, major theoretical paradigms, and current trends in archaeology. This course will cover the major movements within archaeological theory, as well as important intellectual developments from other disciplines which influenced archaeological thought, e.g., Marxism, feminism, structuralism, etc. The purpose of this historically-oriented approach to data analysis and interpretation is to provide the students with an understanding of the context in which archaeological theory has developed and the value of the insights that each of these approaches gives to modern researchers working in the field. Such an understanding is basic to any critique of contemporary archaeology and to the training of competent field archaeologists. Without theory, we can learn nothing useful about the past.

General Teaching Objectives
This course has three fundamental objectives:
1. Help students analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments and points of view;
2. Teach students fundamental principles, generalizations and theories;
3. Teach students factual knowledge.

Required Textbook
There is no required textbook for this course. Prof. Matney will provide reading packets.

Notes on Registration, Enrollment & Dropping Classes
Effective in fall 2011, a new withdrawal policy is now in force at the University of Akron. Details can be found at: http://www.uakron.edu/ogc/UniversityRules/pdf/20-05.1.pdf. The last date to withdraw from this course is February 26.

**Disabilities Accommodation**
If you require accommodation you should contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities at 972-7928, as well as make arrangements with me during the first week of the semester. I will make any reasonable accommodation to help you succeed.

**Requirements & Grading**
Your grade in this course is determined through three components:

(1) 14 short essays, 500-750 words, roughly one per week  \[14 \text{ essays } @ 20 \text{ pts. each} = 280 \text{ points}\]
(2) class participation in discussions \[= 120 \text{ points}\]
(3) final exam, in class, during Exam Week \[2 \text{ essays } @ 50 \text{ pts. each} = 100 \text{ points}\]

Therefore, your course grade is based on a 500 point scale. The following scale is used to determine your grade.

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>300-314</td>
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**Extra credit**
There will occasionally be opportunities for students to earn extra credit points by attending outside lectures, visiting relevant museum exhibits, etc. These opportunities will be announced in class and usually require a short written report to be produced. Waiting for extra credit opportunities is not a good strategy and you should concentrate your efforts on preparing for the exams and working on your other assignments.

**Attendance policy**
Attendance in class is required as part of university and departmental policy. It also makes common sense as you will be expected to know the material covered in class meetings and discussions, not just what is in the textbook.

**Late work policy**
Late work is not accepted. An excused absence is given only if you can present me with an appropriate written excuse from your doctor for emergency purposes. In other words, please do not schedule to have your teeth cleaned during my class hours, but if you or your children are sick enough to require emergency medical treatment, you will not be penalized for missed assignments. Funerals of family members and friends are also acceptable excuses for missing class. Please talk to me at least two weeks in advance to arrange for any other type absence (e.g., weddings, etc.). There are no exceptions to this rule.

**Respecting the Classroom Environment**
Disruptions during class will not be tolerated as such behavior detracts from the learning environment in the classroom and are rude to your fellow students and to me. There will be absolutely NO cell phone use in the class. This means no phone calls and no texting. Personal correspondence should be conducted on your own time. If I see you using a cell phone, you will be asked to leave the classroom for the day. You will not be permitted to make up any graded work missed as a result. Repeat offenses will result in your expulsion from the class and a course grade of ‘F’ on your transcript.
I understand that cell phones are useful in rare emergency situations, so please make specific arrangements with me beforehand if you need to keep you cell phone on vibrate for emergency purposes.

Likewise, there will be NO laptop computer use in the classroom. Laptop use for note-taking only will be allowed for those students with a diagnosed medical need and you will need to arrange this with me beforehand. While using a laptop computer has the potential for enhancing student note-taking, most students in my experience use it to surf the internet, email friends, or work on non-course related materials during class. If you have tasks other than archaeology that you would rather be working on, please have the courtesy to pursue these other activities outside of the classroom.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged borrowing of information, wording, organization, or ideas from another person. Whether the original source is public (e.g., a newspaper, book, journal article, internet site) or private (e.g., a classmate’s paper), you need to indicate your indebtedness to it. Where you repeat the exact language of your source, you must treat the borrowed material as a quotation and place it within quotation marks with an appropriate citation at the end. However, by merely changing a few words or the word order or by paraphrasing, you do not avoid plagiarism. In all cases, you should cite your source. There is nothing wrong in acknowledging an intellectual debt to someone. (This statement itself is adapted from a handout by the Department of English at Trenton State College).

In this course, the penalty for any plagiarism on an exam or other assignment is an automatic grade of F for that exam or assignment. Extensive or repeat plagiarism will result in a course grade of F on your transcript and the filing of charges of Academic Misconduct with University authorities. Your case will furthermore be referred both to the Departmental Chairperson, and to the appropriate Dean within the College of Arts & Sciences for disciplinary actions. For further information on the University’s policies, see the “Academic Dishonesty” section of the *Undergraduate Bulletin*.

**Syllabus**

This syllabus does not represent a formal contract. I will make every effort to cover all the material listed below, but I reserve the right to make changes, as necessary, to this syllabus at any time. Students are responsible for tracking any changes in the syllabus that are announced in class.

**IMPORTANT: PLEASE COMPLETE THE READINGS PRIOR TO CLASS.**

**Week 1 (Jan 9 - 13) Archaeological Epistemology (But I just want to dig...)**

**Topics:**
Course introduction and expectations
In-class exercise: “What do you know about Stonehenge?”
Stonehenge videos and discussion

**Readings:**
Gowland (1902) “Recent Excavations at Stonehenge”
Piggott (1954) “The Druids and Stonehenge”

**Week 2 (Jan 16 - 20) Initial Thoughts on Archaeological Theory**

*No class on Monday, January 16 in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*

**Topics:**
ESSAY #1 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS - WEDNESDAY, JAN. 18
In-class exercise: “Where’s the Theory?”
Evaluating knowledge claims

**Readings:**
Johnson (2010) “Common Sense is Not Enough”
Week 3 (Jan 23 - 27) Early Theorists

Topics:
- ESSAY #2 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – MONDAY, JAN. 23
- Early history of archaeology & cultural-historical archaeology
- Trait list archaeology
- Typology as theory (The Ford-Spaulding debate)

Readings:
- Petrie (1891) “The Art of Excavating”
- White (1945) “History, Evolutionism, and Functionalism”
- Steward (1942) “The Direct Historical Approach to Archaeology”
- Childe (1950) “The Urban Revolution”
- Ford (1954a; 1954b)
- Spaulding (1953; 1954)

Week 4 (Jan 30 – Feb 3) The Processual Critique

Topics:
- ESSAY #3 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – MONDAY, JAN. 30
- Binford’s critique of archaeological practice
- Can archaeology be considered a “true” science?
- Formation processes, analogy, systems theory
- Positivism

Readings:
- Binford (1980) “Willow Smoke and Dogs’ Tails”
- Hill (1968) “Broken K Pueblo: Patterns of Form and Function”
- Longacre/Ayres (1968) “Archaeological Lessons from an Apache Wickiup”

Week 5 (Feb 6 - 10) The Post-Processual Critique

Topics:
- ESSAY #4 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – MONDAY, FEB. 6
- Are individual actions important in interpreting the archaeological record?
- Introducing post-processual (interpretive) archaeology
- How do we get from pot sherds and rocks to human behavior?

Readings:
- Flannery/Marcus (1993) “Cognitive Archaeology”
- Renfrew (2001) “Production and Consumption”

Week 6 (Feb 13 - 17) Human Cognition and Symbolism

Topics:
- ESSAY #5 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – MONDAY, FEB. 13
- How can we understand ancient ideology? Is this even a goal of archaeology?
- Can we determine the role of symbols and their content in ancient times?
- Material symbols & Hodder’s “Reading the Past”

Readings:
- Wobst (1978) “Stylistic Behavior and Information Exchange”
- Condori (1989) “History and Prehistory in Bolivia”

Week 7 (Feb 20 - 24) Landscape and Space

Topics:
- ESSAY #6 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – MONDAY, FEB. 20
- Landscapes, Spaces, and Natures

Readings:
Week 8 (Feb 27 – Mar 2) Evolutionary Theory in Archaeology

No class on Friday, March 2. Prof. Matney is lecturing at Brown University

Topics: ESSAY #7 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – MONDAY, FEB. 27
Does evolutionary theory get us anywhere in explaining the past?
Darwinian and Neo-Darwinian perspectives in archaeology
Biological evolution as model for social evolution

Dunnell (1995) “What is it that Actually Evolves?”

Week 9 (Mar 5 - 9) Agency, Meaning, Practice, and Identity

Topics: ESSAY #8 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – MONDAY, MAR. 5
Agency, Meaning, and Practice
Ethnicity


There are no class meetings the week of March 12-16 for spring break.

Week 10 (Mar 19 - 23) Feminist Theory in Archaeology

Topics: ESSAY #9 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – MONDAY, MAR. 19
Sexuality, Embodiment, and Personhood
How have feminist and gender theories affected archaeology?
Can we see material correlates of sex and gender in the archaeological record?
Sexual division of labor
Critiques of androcentric science
Ecofeminism and Co-Opting Prehistory
Mother-goddesses and the women’s spirituality movement

Readings: Wylie (1997) “Good Science, Bad Science, or Science as Usual?”
Joyce (2000) “Girling the Girl and Boying the Boy…”
Gimbutas (1982) “Women and Culture in Goddess-Oriented Old Europe”

Week 11 (Mar 26 - 30) Race, Class, and Ethnicity

No class on Friday, March 30. Prof. Matney is lecturing at Musée du Louvre in Paris

Topics: ESSAY #10 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – MONDAY, MAR. 26
Jones (1999) “Historical Categories and the Praxis of Identity…”

Week 12 (Apr 2 - 6) Materiality and Memory

Topics: ESSAY #11 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – MONDAY, APR. 2
Materiality, Memory, and Historical Silence
Must archaeology play second fiddle to history?
Ranking, burials


**Week 13 (Apr 9 - 13) Colonialism, Empire, and Nationalism**

**Topics:**
ESSAY #12 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – MONDAY, APR. 9
How can we explain the emergence of complex states and empires?
Economic and ecological archaeology, world systems theory
Trade and redistribution; modes of production, energy flow, core-periphery models,

**Readings:**

**Week 14 (Apr 16 - 20) Ethics, Heritage, Patrimony, and Social Justice**

*No class on Friday, April 20. Prof. Matney is lecturing at SAA conference in Memphis*

**Topics:**
ESSAY #13 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – MONDAY, APR. 16
Archaeology and presentations of power
Nazi archaeology, At the Service of the State
Constructing identity’s for (dead) “others”
Relativist critiques of archaeology; archaeology as social practice

**Readings:**

**Week 15 (Apr 23 - 27) Media, Museums, and Publics**

**Topics:**
ESSAY #14 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – MONDAY, APR. 23
Hollywood and the Indiana Jones Phenomenon
Archaeologists in literature
Ethics in archaeology; responsibility towards the past
Future of archaeology

**Readings:**
Gero and Root (1990) “Public Presentations and Private Concerns…”

**FINAL EXAM – as scheduled for final exam week**
FULL REFERENCES FOR REQUIRED ARTICLES


