ANTH/ARCP372

The Archaeology of Death

Fall 2016

Douglas Charles
Office hours: Thursdays, 2:00-5:00 pm, or by appointment (via email)
Anthropology Department, 281 High Street, Room 21
Phone: x3266 (you will probably only get voicemail)
Email: dcharles@wesleyan.edu (the best way to get in touch with me)

Course Description
The material culture and biological remains associated with death represents a major component of the archaeological record. Funerary assemblages can provide information about, for example, ritual practices, beliefs, social organization, the division of labor, diet, and health. Tombs and monuments are important elements of sacred landscapes. The course will examine how archaeologists and biological anthropologists investigate and analyze mortuary facilities, grave goods, skeletal remains, and sacred landscapes and make inferences about the past.

Reading Assignments
All readings will be available on Moodle (bibliography at end of syllabus). Reading assignments should be completed before coming to class on the date they are listed in the syllabus.

Writing Assignments
Two essays (each 20% of course grade; ~5 pages each), class presentation (20% of course grade), and a final research paper (40% of course grade; ~20 pages). Participation in class discussions is expected, and failure to do so may lead to reduction of final grade.

The first essay will be based on the readings to date. The second essay will be a description of the problem you will address in your research paper, including an initial bibliography for the project.

The research paper represents 60% of your grade. The in-class presentation should be a prepared 8-10 page synopsis of your research paper. The feedback from the oral presentation can be used to improve the final written version.

Disability Resources
Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and provide documentation of the disability. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Disability Resources as soon as possible.

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Dean Patey in Disability Resources located in North College, room 021, or call 860-685-5581 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations.
# Course Outline

**Week 1  ** Introduction  
Readings:  
- Sept. 6  none  
- Sept. 8  Daniels and David, “The cemetery of Bilj”  
  (analyze the site and see what inferences you can draw)

**Week 2  ** The Anthropology and Archaeology of Death  
Readings:  
- Sept. 13  Hertz, “A Contribution to the study of the collective representation of death”  
  van Gennep, “The territorial passage” and “Funerals”  
- Sept. 15  Kus, “Death and the cultural entanglements of the experienced, the learned, the expressed, the contested, and the imagined”  
  Parker Pearson, “Learning from the dead”

**Week 3  ** Bioarchaeology of Death (first essay assigned 9/20)  
Readings:  
- Sept. 20  Goldstein, “Mortuary analysis and bioarchaeology”  
  Larsen, “Bioarchaeology”  
- Sept. 22  Charles, “Grave concerns”  
  Sofaer, “The body and convention in archaeological practice”

**Week 4  ** Ethnographic Analogy (first essay due 9/29)  
Readings:  
- Sept. 27  Binford, “Mortuary practices”  
  Goldstein, “One-dimensional archaeology and multidimensional people”  
- Sept. 29  Schroeder, “Secondary disposal of the dead”  
  Wylie, “Archaeological cables and tacking”

**Week 5  ** Status, Rank and Power  
Readings:  
- Oct. 4  Chapman, “Mortuary analysis”  
  Peebles and Kus, “Some archaeological correlates of ranked societies”  
- Oct. 6  Cannon, “Historical dimension in mortuary expressions of status and sentiment”  
  Gillespie, “Personhood, agency, and mortuary ritual”
### Week 6  
**Reading the Body and the Grave**

**Readings:**  
**Oct. 11**  
Billman et al., “Cannibalism, warfare, and drought in the Mesa Verde region during the twelfth century A.D.”  
Darling, “Mass inhumation and the execution of witches in the American Southwest”  
Dongoske et al., “Critique of the claim of cannibalism at Cowboy Wash”  
Lambert et al., “Response to critique of the claim of cannibalism at Cowboy Wash”  

**Oct. 13**  
Kuijt, “The generation of life”  
Olivier, “The Hochdorf ‘princely’ grave and the question of the nature of archaeological funerary assemblages”

### Week 7  
**Gender and Kinship**

**Readings:**  
**Oct. 18**  
Cannon, “Gender and agency in mortuary fashion”  
Hollimon, “Warfare and gender in the northern Plains”  
Stalsberg, “Visible women made invisible”  

**Oct. 20**  
Brück, “Women, death and social change in the British Bronze Age”  
Hodder “Burials, houses, women and men in the European Neolithic”

### Week 8  
**Symbols (second essay due 10/27)**

**Oct. 25**  
**FALL BREAK**

**Oct. 27**  
Carr and Novotny, “Arrangement of human remains and artifacts in Scioto Hopewell burials”  
Jamieson, “Material culture and social death: African-American burial practices”

### Week 9  
**Placing the Dead**

**Readings:**  
**Nov. 1**  
Chapman, “The emergence of formal disposal areas and the problem of megalithic tombs in prehistoric Europe”  
Morris, “The archaeology of ancestors”  

**Nov. 3**  
Ashmore and Geller, “Social dimensions of mortuary space”  
Parker Pearson, “Placing the physical and the incorporeal dead”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 10</th>
<th>Monuments to the Dead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Readings: | Nov. 8 Bakker, “Monuments to the dead in ancient north India”  
Barrett, “The monumentality of death”  
Nov. 10 Charles, “Colorful practices in Hopewellian earthwork construction”  
Owoc, “From the ground up” |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 11</th>
<th>The Human Experience of Death</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Readings: | Nov. 15 Fernández-Jalvo et al. “Human cannibalism in the early Pleistocene of Europe (Gran Dolina, Sierra de Atapuerca, Burgos, Spain)”  
Gargett, “Grave Shortcomings”  
Nov. 17 Formicola, “From the Sunghir children to the Romito dwarf”  
Watkins “The origins of house and home?”  
Metcalf and Huntington, “American deathways” |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 12</th>
<th>The Politics, Ethics and Future of the Archaeology of Death</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Readings: | Nov. 22 Kakaliouras, “Leaving few bones unturned”  
Komar, “Patterns of mortuary practice associated with genocide”  
Watkins, “How ancients become ammunition”  
Nov. 24 THANKSGIVING BREAK |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 13</th>
<th>Class Presentations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 14</th>
<th>Class Presentations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Final paper due Friday, December 16\textsuperscript{th}, 2:00 pm, in the Anthropology Department (box outside my office, Rm. 21, second floor).
References for readings on Moodle:


van Gennep, A. (1960 [1908]) The Rites of Passage. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

