

Archaeology 307
Introduction to Ethnoarchaeology
Fall 2008

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Office hours: Wednesday 1-2pm or by appointment

Lectures: Tuesday/Thursday 2:00-3:15

Course Description:

This course introduces students to ethnoarchaeology and analogical reasoning. Ethnoarchaeology uses a variety of theoretical approaches and methods. Lectures illustrate the application of these approaches and methods to a range of material culture domains worldwide. These examples highlight the actual and potential contributions of ethnoarchaeology to archaeology and anthropology. Assignments will provide students opportunities to apply these concepts to their everyday material world.

Prerequisites:

Arky 201 or consent of the department.

Required text:

David, Nicholas and Carol Kramer. 2001. *Ethnoarchaeology in Action*. Cambridge University Press.

Readings on-line:

All journal articles are available on-line; readings are listed by week in a separate file on blackboard called "on-line readings".

Course Outline: Note films may be changed at the discretion of the instructor.

Week 1: Background to Ethnoarchaeology: Why do it?

Sept. 9: Course introduction; general introduction to ethnoarchaeology

Sept. 11: Testing your skills of observation: The Netsilik

Readings: Chapter 1: Ethnoarchaeology: its origins, nature and history.

CLASSES ON SEPT 18, 23, 25 ON ETHICS AND ANALOGY ARE MANDATORY AND STUDENTS MUST SIGN IN OR THEY CANNOT PROCEED TO DATA COLLECTION FOR ASSIGNMENTS 1 and 2. THIS IS A UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENT OF THE FACULTY ETHICS COMMITTEE.

Week 2: History of Ethnoarchaeology and Ethics or "The Importance of Being Earnest"; Analogical reasoning

Sept. 16: Ethnoarchaeology background: history and contributions

Sept. 18 Ethics and the issue of informed consent

Reading: Chapter 3: Fieldwork and Ethics

Week 3: Ethnoarchaeological Method and Theory

Sept. 23: Analogical Reasoning: problems and applications

Sept. 25: Theoretical paradigms; Linking ethnoarchaeology and archaeology

Film: Fipa iron working as an example

Week 4: Ethnoarchaeology Method and Theory/Site Formation Processes: Part 1

Sept. 30: Methodology: collecting and analyzing data

Oct. 2: Site formation processes the processual way

Reading: Chapter 4: Human residues: entering the archaeological context

Week 5: Site Formation Processes: Part 2

Oct. 7: Site formation processes: the postprocessual or interpretive way

Oct. 9: **Exam 1 (25% of final grade)**

Week 6: Ethnoarchaeology of Subsistence: Testing Archaeological Assumptions

Oct. 14: Ethnoarchaeological studies of hunter/gatherers

Oct. 16: Food fights: ethnoarchaeological studies of feasting and food preparation
Assignment 1 is due! (20% of final grade)

Reading: Chapter 5: Fauna and subsistence.

Week 7: Ethnoarchaeology of Technology

Oct. 21: Functional approaches to technology (Discussion of Assignment 1)

Oct. 23: Social and symbolic approaches to technology

Film: Blooms of Banjelli: Technology and Gender in African Ironmaking or Hide Workers of Ethiopia.

Reading: Chapter 6: Studying artifacts

Week 8: Ethnoarchaeology of Material Culture Style

Oct. 28: Theoretical considerations in studying material culture style

Oct. 30: Material Culture and constructing identity

Reading: Chapter 7: Style and the marking of boundaries: contrasting regional studies.

Week 9: Ethnoarchaeology of Households, Communities, and Landscape

Nov. 4: Communities and Landscapes

Nov. 6: Households and Social Relations

Reading: Chapter 8: Settlement: Systems and Patterns
Chapter 9: Site Structures and Activities

Week 10: Ethnoarchaeology of Identity

Nov. 11: **Holiday!!!!**

Nov. 13: Household Ethnoarchaeology
Assignment 2 is due! (20% of final grade)

Reading: Chapter 10: Architecture

Week 11: The Ethnoarchaeology of Specialist Craft Production and Apprenticeship

Nov. 18: *Exam 2 (25% of final grade)*

Nov. 20: Craft production and perceptions of pollution/Discussion of Assignment 2

Reading: Chapter 11: Specialist Craft Production and Apprenticeship

Week 12: Trade and Exchange; Systems of Meaning

Nov. 25: Ceramic ethnoarchaeology

Nov. 27: Tracking trade

Film: Somalian Potters

Reading: Chapter 12: Trade and Exchange

Week 13: Systems of Meaning: The Ethnoarchaeology of Death

Dec. 2: Ethnoarchaeology of mortuary practices

Dec. 4: *Final Quiz (10% of final grade)*

Reading: Chapter 13: Mortuary Practices, Status, Ideology, and Systems of Thought

Course Evaluation:

2 assignments: 40%

exam 1: 25%

exam 2: 25%

final quiz: 10%

Exams are non-cumulative. Each exam covers the materials in readings, lectures and films presented in that unit. The final quiz covers materials in the last 4 lectures and films. **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED. (They can be handed in early but not after dates posted)**

Assignments

It is important that information gathered by observation or interview of informants be kept anonymous. The importance of informed consent and the ethics of conducting ethnoarchaeological research are discussed in Weeks 2 and 3. **THE CLASSES IN WEEKS 2 AND 3 ARE MANDATORY FOR ALL STUDENTS BEFORE COMMENCING DATA COLLECTION FOR ASSIGNMENTS.** This is a qualification of the university's ethical approval of this course and all students will be required to sign an attendance form during the class.

All data in assignments are marked by the instructor and returned to the student. Do not identify individuals by name. Refer to your informants only by a number, age, gender or other relevant but general information. All individuals observed or interviewed must be aware of the purpose of your study and provide voluntary consent. At the end of the course raw notes from interviews will be collected and shredded before final grades are submitted.

These assignments simulate an ethnoarchaeological study, but owing to the constraints of time and circumstance, they may not fit the precise definition of ethnoarchaeology as presented in your text. But you will be using ethnoarchaeological methods for a problem that archaeologists address.

PLEASE NOTE: powerpoint lecture notes for this course are NOT provided on Blackboard. An essential skill in conducting ethnoarchaeology is effective notetaking! (a field skill that is often performed in more than one language with simultaneous and usually constant interruptions from goats, sheep, crowing roosters, small children and other activities!!!!)

Grading Scheme:

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|----------|----|
| 96-100 | A+ |
| 91-95 | A |
| 86-90 | A- |
| 81-85 | B+ |
| 76-80 | B |
| 71-75 | B- |
| 66-70 | C+ |
| 61-65 | C |
| 56-60 | C- |
| 53-55 | D+ |
| 51-52 | D |
| below 50 | F |