

ARKY 615 – Topics In Archaeological Method and Theory
Professor Kathryn Reese-Taylor
Office: ES 850
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2:00-3:00 pm or by appointment)
Email: kreeseta@ucalgary.ca

Abstract

This seminar course is designed to provide graduate students in archaeology with a firm foundation in the history and development of theory and method in archaeological research. An important objective of this course is to examine how events in society, the personal histories of individual scholars, and theoretical developments in other disciplines helped to shape the advancement of archaeological theory. Students will be expected to attend all classes fully prepared to discuss topics which will be assigned on a weekly basis.

Student Evaluation

1. Research Paper – (Due March 1, 2010) - 25%
2. Class Presentation and Discussion – 25%
3. Research Proposal (Due last day of class) - 40%
4. Class Participation - 10%

Suggested Topics for Class Discussion and Research Papers

- Archaic States
- Behavioral Archaeology
- Built Environment
- Cognitive Archaeology
- Cognitive Science
- Critical Theory
- Ethics in Archaeology
- Ethnicity
- Ethnoarchaeology
- Evolutionary Ecology
- Evolutionary Archaeology
- Experimental Archaeology
- Functionalism
- Gender
- Geoarchaeology
- Historical Archaeology
- Household Archaeology
- Human Agency
- Identity
- Landscape Archaeology
- Marxism/NeoMarxism
- Middle Range Theory
- Origins of Complexity
- Origins of Food Production
- Paleoethnobotany
- Political Economy
- Post-Colonialism
- Power and Resistance
- Radical Constructivism
- Social/Cultural Evolution
- Spatial Analysis in Archaeology
- Structuralism/Post-Structuralism
- Structuration
- Systems Theory
- Style
- Theory in Public Archaeology
- Typology and Classification
- Visualization of Archaeological Data

Assignments

Research Paper (25%). Choose a topic in archaeological method and theory and write a research paper in which you outline it's basic tenets, major proponents, important case studies, and major criticisms leveled against it. I am interested in hearing your own thoughts on the topic you choose, as well as those of other archaeologists. 15-20 pages.

Class Presentation and Discussion (25%). You will be required to present one topic in archaeological method and theory to the class and lead the following discussion. Your presentation should cover the basic tenets, major proponents, important case studies, and major critiques of the topic. You may use the same topic that you are addressing in your research paper (in fact, I advise you to use the same topic). The presentation will be 45 minutes in length.

In addition, you will be responsible for selecting 4-6 articles that provide a solid overview of that topic. You will place copies of each article on reserve in the Archaeology reading room for other students to access. You will then lead the class discussion for that week.

Research Proposal (40%). You will be required to submit a proposal for addressing a specific problem in archaeology. You must follow the SSHRC guidelines for a Standard Research Grant (I will post the guidelines). You will need to include 1) a statement of your problem or question; 2) your theoretical orientation; 3) a review of the background literature; 4) your methodology; and 5) the significance of the proposed research.

Class Participation (10%). Participation in class discussions is important to the success of a seminar. Each student is expected to contribute to class discussions during every class period. In addition, during class periods when there is no graduate student leading the discussion, each student must be prepared to introduce and lead the discussion of at least one article.