

# THE ARCHEOLOGY OF DEATH

ANG6191 (section 10530)

Spring 2019

Instructor: Dr. James M. Davidson

Course Level/Structure: Graduate seminar

Time: Thursday -- periods 2 through 4 (8:30 AM - 11:30 AM)

Class Room: Turlington Hall, Room 1208H

Office: Turlington B134

Email: davidson@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday 2 – 5 pm (and by appointment)

Website for electronic readings: <http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/davidson/courses.htm>

**Course Description and Objectives:** The seminar's goal is to provide a solid grounding in the anthropological literature of Mortuary studies; that is, data derived from a study of the Death Experience. In addition to archaeological data, a strong emphasis will be placed on the theoretical underpinnings of mortuary data, drawn from cultural anthropology and ethnography. Along with more theoretical papers, specific case studies will be used to address a variety of topics and issues, such as Social Organization and Social Structure, Spirituality and Religion, Skeletal Biology (e.g., Paleodemography, Paleopathology, and other issues of Bioarchaeology), Gender Issues, The Ethics of using Human Remains, and Post-Processual Critiques of Mortuary Archaeology. 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.

## **Course Requirements:**

Class participation/attendance	5%
Leading Class Discussion:	5%
Synopses (of specific readings)	20%
Two essay/reaction papers	20%
Major research paper	50%

## **Texts:**

- 1). Chapman, Robert (editor)  
1981 *The Archaeology of Death*. Cambridge University Press.
- 2). Parker Pearson, Mike  
1999 *The Archaeology of Death and Burial*. Texas A&M University Press.
- 3). The primary texts will be derived from individual readings (e.g., articles, book chapters) (see website)

**Attendance:** Regular attendance and participation in class discussions is a requirement. Students are expected to have read the material for that day, and come to class prepared to discuss the readings.

**Synopses of Readings/Two Exercise or Reaction Papers:**

For some key readings, a synopsis (i.e., a critical summary) ranging from one to three paragraphs (not to exceed one page in length for each reading) will be required and due at the beginning of each class, before we begin the discussion. Readings requiring synopses are marked with a bold, underlined **X** at the end of each citation.

Two smaller paper assignments, on specific readings, will range from 5 to 10 pages each. Their topics and due dates are given below.

**Team Discussion:**

Each week, a student will lead class discussion. Each student will be expected to organize readings, read them with care, and to prepare a list of questions/points of discussion. If you wish, you may meet with me, to talk about the readings prior to class. As this constitutes a substantial portion of the grade (10%), each discussion leader will be expected to participate and have an active voice.

**Research Paper:**

One major research paper will be due at the end of the semester: graduate students (15 to 20 pages); undergraduate students (10 to 15 pages).

Each student will choose the individual topics of the paper, after consultation with me. It could involve original research, an analysis of an existing dataset, or a comparison of two or more papers, sites, or theories. Each student will briefly present his or her work to the class, during the last class of the semester (April 18). The formality of this presentation (e.g., power point, etc.) is negotiable.

Final Papers are due by on last day of Spring Semester (Wednesday, April 24)

**Grading:**

A final letter grade will be assigned at the end of the semester, according to this scale:

- A (93-100%)
- A- (90-92%)
- B+ (88-89%)
- B (83-87%)
- B- (80-82%)
- C+ (78-79%)
- C (73-77%)
- C- (70-72%)
- D+ (68-69%)
- D (63-67%)
- D- (60-62%)
- E (59% or below)

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is required. Excessive unexcused absences will detract from the student's final grade (see above).

**Accommodating Students with Disabilities:**

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who in turn must provide this documentation to me when requesting accommodation.

**Academic Honesty:**

The University reminds every student of the implied pledge of Academic Honesty: “on any work submitted for credit the student has neither received nor given unauthorized aid.” This refers to cheating and plagiarism. Consult the Student Guide at [www.dso.ufl.edu/stg/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/stg/) for further information. Students caught cheating will be referred to the University administration for disciplinary action, the consequences of which can include (among other things) failure of this course.

**Schedule/Topics/Readings:**

Week 1 (January 10)

NO CLASS I will be attending the Society for Historical Archaeology Meetings

Week 2 (January 17)

**Historical Perspectives on the Anthropological and Archaeological Study of Death**

*Emphasis during the first class sessions will be on some of the fundamental literature upon which contemporary interpretations of archaeological burials are based. The readings include both summaries of historical developments and older works; some of the latter have only historical value.*

*It may be helpful to read Chapman and Randsborg 1981 (pp. 1-24) first, as background.*

Hertz, Robert

1960 [1907] A contribution to the study of the collective representation of death. In *Death and the Right Hand*. The Free Press, Glencoe, IL. **X**

**Read only pp. 27-86 of Hertz (notes for these pages are between 117-154).**

Kroeber, Alfred L.

1927 Disposal of the dead. *American Anthropologist* 29:308-315

Childe, V. Gordon

1945 Directional changes in funerary practices during 50,000 years. *Man* 45:13-19.

Binford, Lewis R.

1962 Archaeology as anthropology. *American Antiquity* 28(2):217-225. X

Ucko, Peter

1969 Ethnography and archaeological interpretation of funerary remains. *World Archaeology* 1: 262-80. X

Chapman, Robert, and Klavs Randsborg

1981 Approaches to the archaeology of death. In *The Archaeology of Death*, edited by Robert Chapman, I. Kinnes, and Klavs Randsborg, pp. 1-24. Cambridge University Press.

Text (Parker Pearson) --- Chapter One (pages 1-20)

### **Supplementary Reading (not required, but useful)**

Palgi, Phyllis and Henry Abramovitch

1984 Death: A Cross-Cultural Perspective. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 13:385-417.

Bartel, Brad

1982 A historical review of ethnological and archaeological analyses of mortuary practices. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 1:32-58.

## **Week 3 (January 24)**

### **Theoretical Positions and Issues**

*This class will focus on the framework within which the interpretation of human burials developed in the 1970s and 1980s.*

Binford, Lewis R.

1971 Mortuary practices: their study and their potential. In *Approaches to the Social Dimensions of Mortuary Practices*, edited by J. A. Brown. Society for American Archaeology Memoir 25: 6-29. X

Goodenough, Ward

1965 Rethinking “status” and “role”: Toward a general model of the cultural organization of social relationships. In *The Relevance of Models for Social Anthropology*, edited by Michael Blanton, pp. 1-24. A.S.A. Monographs No. 1. Praeger, New York. X

Brown, James A.

1971 The dimensions of status in the burials at Spiro. In *Approaches to the Social Dimensions of Mortuary Practices*, edited by J.A. Brown, pp. 92-112. Society for American Archaeology Memoir 25.

Tainter, Joseph A.

1978 Mortuary practices and the study of prehistoric social systems. *Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory* 1:105-141. X

Braun, David

1979 Illinois Hopewell burial practices and social organization: a reexamination of the Klunk-Gibson mound group. In *Hopewell Archaeology: The Chillicothe Conference*, edited by D. Brose and N. Greber, pp. 66-79. Cleveland Museum of Natural History and Kent State University Press, Kent, Ohio. X

(Supplementary reading: not required but strongly recommended, especially Saxe's discussion and definition of his hypotheses)

Saxe, Arthur A.

1970 Social Dimensions of Mortuary Practices. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan. (Emphasize pp. 1-121)

Braun, David

1981 A Critique of Some Recent North American Mortuary Studies. *American Antiquity* 48(2):398-416.

Tainter, Joseph A.

1981 Reply to "A Critique of Some Recent North American Mortuary Studies." *American Antiquity* 46(2):416-420.

Parker Pearson ---- Chapter 4 (pages 72-94)

## Week 4 (January 31)

### **Theoretical Positions and Issues II**

O'Shea, John M.

1984 *Mortuary Variability: An Archaeological Investigation*. Academic Press, New York. (Emphasize Chapters 1, 2, 3, 7, 8)

Peebles, Christopher S. and Susan M. Kus

1977 Some archaeological correlates of ranked societies. *American Antiquity* 42(3):421- 448. X

Hodder, Ian

1982 The identification and interpretation of ranking in prehistory: A contextual perspective. In *Ranking, Resource and Exchange: Aspects of the Archaeology of Early European Society*, edited by A. C. Renfrew and S. J. Shennan, pp. 150-154. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. X

Parker Pearson ----- Chapter 2 (pages 21-44)

## Week 5 (February 7)

### **Explanation and Mortuary Studies**

*Case studies highlighting specific applications of mortuary theory. The readings for this week deal with the interpretation of the rise of sedentism and marking control over critical resources. This is the subject of Saxe's (1970) Hypothesis 8.*

Chapman, Robert

1981 The emergence of formal disposal areas and the “problem” of megalithic tombs in prehistoric Europe. In *The Archaeology of Death*, edited by R. Chapman, I. Kinnes, and K. Randsborg, pp. 71-81. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. X

Charles, Douglas and Jane Buikstra

1983 Archaic mortuary sites in the central Mississippi drainage: distribution, structure, and behavioral implications. In *Archaic Hunters and Gatherers in the American Midwest*, edited by J. L. Phillips and J.A. Brown, pp. 117-145. Academic Press, New York. X

Saxe, Arthur A. and Patricia L. Gall

1977 Ecological determinants of mortuary practices: the Temuan of Malaysia. In *Cultural- Ecological Perspectives on Southeast Asia*, edited by W. Wood, 41: 74-82. Papers in International Southeast Asia Studies, Ohio University, Athens.

Goldstein, Lynne

1981 One-dimensional archaeology and multi-dimensional people: spatial organization and mortuary analysis. In *The Archaeology of Death*, edited by R. Chapman, I. Kinnes, and K. Randsborg, pp. 53-69. Cambridge University Press. X

Dillehay, Tom D.

1990 Mapuche ceremonial landscape, social recruitment and resource rights. *World Archaeology* 22: 223-241. X

Glazier, Jack

1984 Mbeere ancestors and the domestication of death. *Man* (ns) 19:133-148.

Parker Pearson ---- Chapter 3 (pages 72-94)

**Paper No. 1: write an essay (8 to 10 pages in length), that discusses the Saxe-Binford approach to Mortuary data, emphasizing the middle range nature of their efforts, and how their approach may be defined as “representationist.”**  
**How can it be applied to archaeological data, and what would be some potential pitfalls in this application?**

## Week 6 (February 14)

## **Bioarchaeological Perspectives**

*Topics covered in this class would include paleodemography, paleopathology, diet and nutrition, and the biological costs and benefits of maize agriculture. Consider the prehistoric and historic case studies; how do they differ?*

Ambrose, Stanley H., Jane Buikstra, and Harold W. Krueger

2003 Status and gender differences in diet at Mound 72, Cahokia, revealed by isotopic analysis of bone. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 22:217-226.

Rose, Jerome C., Murray K. Marks, and Larry L. Tieszen

1991 Bioarchaeology and Subsistence in the Central and Lower Portions of the Mississippi Valley. In *What Mean These Bones? Studies in Southeastern Bioarchaeology*, edited by M.L. Powell, P.S. Bridges, and A.M. Wagner Mires, pp. 7-21. University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa.

Larsen, Clark Spencer; Mark C. Griffin, Dale L. Hutchinson, Vivian E. Noble, Lynette Norr, Robert F. Pastor, Christopher B. Ruff, Katherine F. Russell, Margaret J. Schoeninger, Michael Schultz, Scott W. Simpson, and Mark F. Teaford

2001 Frontiers of Contact: Bioarchaeology of Spanish Florida. *Journal of World Prehistory* 15(1):69-123.

Davidson, James M., Jerome Rose, Myron Gutmann, Michael Haines, Cindy Condon, and Keith Condon

2002 The Quality of African-American Life in the Old Southwest near the Turn of the 20th Century. In *The Backbone of History: Health and Nutrition in the Western Hemisphere*, edited by Richard Steckel, pp. 226-277. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Wood, James W., George R. Milner, Henry C. Harpending, and Kenneth M. Weiss

1992 The osteological paradox: Problems of inferring health from skeletal samples. *Current Anthropology* 33(4): 343-370.

Wright, Lori E. and Cassady J. Yoder

2003 Recent Progress in Bioarchaeology: Approaches to the Osteological Paradox. *Journal of Archaeological Research* 11(1):43-70.

### **Supplementary Readings (not required, but may be useful, especially if you have little experience in skeletal biology, paleopathology, paleodemography, etc.)**

Larson, Clark Spencer

2002 Bioarchaeology: The Lives and Lifestyles of Past People. *Journal of Archaeological Research* 10(2):119-166.

Boquet-Appel, Jean-Pierre and Claude Massett

1982 Farewell to Paleodemography. *Journal of Human Evolution* 11:321-333.

Van Gerven, Dennis P. and George J. Armelagos  
1983 "Farewell to Paleodemography?" Rumors of Its Death Have Been Greatly Exaggerated. *Journal of Human Evolution* 121:353-360.

## Week 7 (February 21)

### **Archaeological Case Studies I: North America**

Brown, James A.

1981 The search for rank in prehistoric burials. In *The Archaeology of Death*, edited by R. Chapman, I. Kinnes, and K. Randsborg, pp. 25-37. Cambridge University Press.

Gilman, Patricia S.

1990 Social organization and Classic Mimbres period burials in the SW United States. *Journal of Field Archaeology* 17:457-469.

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. X

Shryock, Andrew J.

1987 The Wright Mound reexamined: Generative structures and the political economy of a simple chiefdom. *Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology* 12:243-268. X

Mainfort, Robert C., Jr.

1989 Adena chiefdoms? Evidence from the Wright Mound. *Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology* 14(2):164-178. X

Milner, George R., Eve Anderson, and Virginia G. Smith

1991 Warfare in late prehistoric west-central Illinois. *American Antiquity* 56(4):581-603. X

## Week 8 (February 28)

### **Archaeological Case Studies II: South America, Europe, the Near East**

Byrd, Brian F., and Christopher M. Monahan

1995 Death, mortuary ritual, and Natufian social structure. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 14:251-287. X

Dillehay, Tom D.

1995 Mounds of social death: Araucanian funerary rites and political succession. In *Tombs for the Living: Andean Mortuary Practices*, edited by Tom D. Dillehay, pp. 281-313. Dumbarton Oaks, Washington. X



Pollock, Susan

1991 Of priestesses, princes and poor relations: The dead in the royal cemetery of Ur. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 1(2): 171-189.

Randsborg, Klavs

1981 Burial, succession and early state formation in Denmark. In *The Archaeology of Death*, edited by Robert Chapman, I. Kinnes, and Klavs Randsborg, pp. 105-121. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. X

### Week 9 (March 7)

#### No Classes – Spring Break

### Week 10 (March 14)

#### **Ethnographic and Historical Observations on Treatment of the Dead**

Metcalf, Peter A.

1976 Who are the Berawan? Ethnic classification and the distribution of secondary treatment of the dead in central north Borneo. *Oceania* 47:85-105. X

Metcalf, Peter

1981 Meaning and materialism: The ritual economy of death. *Man* 16:564-578. X

Precourt, Walter E.

1984 Mortuary practices and economic transaction: A hologeistic study. *Research in Economic Anthropology* 6: 161-170. X

Aries, Phillippe

1974 *Western Attitudes Toward Death*. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.

### Week 11 (March 21)

#### **Ethnographic Observations II**

Elliott, John R.

1990 Funerary Artifacts in Contemporary America. *Death Studies* 14: 601-612.

Pearson, Michael Parker

1982 Mortuary practices, society and ideology: an ethnoarchaeological study. In *Symbolic and Structural Archaeology*, edited by Ian Hodder, pp. 99-113. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. X

Farrell, James J.

1980 *Inventing the American Way of Death, 1830-1920*. Temple University Press, Philadelphia. **(Read pages 16-73)**.

McGuire, Randall H.

1988 Dialogues with the Dead: Ideology and the Cemetery. In *The Recovery of Meaning: Historical Archaeology in the Eastern United States*, edited by Mark P. Leone and Parker B. Potter, Jr., pp. 435-480. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. **X**

Dethlefsen, Edwin N. and James Deetz

1966 Death's Heads, Cherubs, and Willow Trees: Experimental Archaeology in Colonial Cemeteries. *American Antiquity* 31(4):502-510.

Jamieson, Ross W.

1995 Material culture and social death: African-American burial practices. *Historical Archaeology* 29(4):39-58. **X**

## Week 12 (March 28)

### **Archaeological Case Studies III: Historical Archaeology**

Mainfort, Robert C., Jr.

1985 Wealth, space, and status in a historic Indian cemetery. *American Antiquity* 50:555-579. **X**

Bell, Edward L.

1990 The historical archaeology of mortuary behavior: Coffin hardware from Uxbridge, Massachusetts. *Historical Archaeology* 24(3):54-78. **X**

Bell, Edward L.

1994 Archaeological investigations of historical cemeteries: An introduction to scholarly trends and prospects. In *Vestiges of Mortality and Remembrance*, by Edward L. Bell, pp. 1-54. Scarecrow Press, Methuen (NJ) and London.

Cannon, Aubrey

1989 The Historic Dimension in Mortuary Expressions of Status and Sentiment. *Current Anthropology* 30(4):437-458. **X**

Davidson, James M.

2008 Identity and Violent Death: Contextualizing Lethal Gun Violence within the African-American Community of Dallas, TX (1900-1907). *The Journal of Social Archaeology* 8(3):321-356.

Little, Barbara J., Kim M. Lamphear, and Douglas W. Owsley

1992 Mortuary display and status in a nineteenth-century Anglo-American cemetery in Manassas, Virginia. *American Antiquity* 57(3):397-418. **X**

Gould, Elspeth M. and David B. Chappel  
2000 Graveyard gleanings: socio-economic, geographical and gender inequalities in health at Tynemouth, UK, 1833-1853. *Journal of Public Health Medicine* 22(3):280-286.

Davidson, James M.  
2010 Keeping the Devil at Bay: The Shoe on the Coffin Lid and Other Grave Charms in 19th and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century America. *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 14(4):614-649.

**Paper No. 2: Write an essay (5 to 10 pages in length) discussing the methodologies and theoretical underpinnings of historic mortuary studies, contrasting them with prehistoric theory and datasets. Especially emphasize the search for “status” markers.**

## Week 13 (April 4)

### **Ethical Perspectives in Mortuary Archaeology**

McGowan, Gary S. and Cheryl J. LaRoche  
1996 The Ethical Dilemma Facing Conservation: Care and Treatment of Human Skeletal Remains and Mortuary Objects. *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation* 35(2):109-121.

Crist, Thomas  
2002 Empowerment, Ecology, and Evidence: The Relevance of Mortuary Archaeology to the Public. In *Public Benefits of Archaeology*, pp. 101-117, edited by Barbara J. Little. University Press of Florida, Gainesville.

Buikstra, Jane E., and Claire C. Gordon  
1981 The study and re-study of human skeletal series: The importance of long-term curation. In *The Research Potential of Anthropological Collections*, edited by A.E. Cantwell, J.B. Griffin, and N.A. Rothschild, pp. 449-465. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, Volume 376. **X**

Walker, Phillip L.  
2000 Bioarchaeological Ethics: A Historical Perspective on the Value of Human Remains. In *Biological Anthropology of the Human Skeleton*, pp. 3-39, edited by M. Anne Katzenberg and Shelley R. Saunders. Wiley-Liss, Inc. **X**

Rose, Jerome C., Thomas J. Green, and Victoria D. Green  
1996 NAGPRA is forever: Osteology and the repatriation of skeletons. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 25: 81-103. **X**

Watkins, Joe

2004 Becoming American or Becoming Indian? Nagpra, Kennewick and Cultural Affiliation. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 4(1):60-80. **X**

Morrell, Virginia

1995 Who Owns the Past? *Science* 268(5216):1424-1426.

World Council of Indigenous Peoples

1990 The sacred and the profane: The reburial issue as an issue. *Death Studies* 14:503-517.

## Week 14 (April 11)

### **Postprocessual and other Criticisms of Mortuary Site Studies**

Chapman, Robert

2003 Death, society, and Archaeology: the social dimensions of mortuary practices. *Mortality* 8(3):3-5-312.

Barrett, John C.

1990 The monumentality of death: The character of Early Bronze Age mortuary mounds in southern Britain. *World Archaeology* 22:179-189. **X**

Sullivan, Lynne P.

2001 Those Men in the Mounds: Gender, Politics, and Mortuary Practices in Late Prehistoric Eastern Tennessee. In *Archaeological Studies of Gender in the Southeastern United States*, edited by Jane M. Eastman and Christopher B. Rodning, pp. 101-126. University Press of Florida, Gainesville. **X**

Joyce, Rosemary A.

2001 Burying the Dead at Tlatilco: Social Memory and Social Memories. In *Archeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association Number 10; Social Memory, Identity, and Death: Anthropological Perspectives on Mortuary Rituals*, edited by Meredith S. Chesson, pp. 12-26. **X**

Brown, James

1995 On Mortuary Analysis – with Special Reference to the Saxe-Binford Research Program. In *Regional Approaches to Mortuary Analysis*, pp. 3-26, edited by Lane Anderson Beck. Plenum Press, New York.

Chapman, Robert

1995 Ten years after-Megaliths, mortuary practices, and the territorial model. In *Regional Approaches to Mortuary Analysis*, edited by L.A. Beck, pp. 29-51. Plenum Press, New York.

Lull, Vicente

2000 Death and Society: a Marxist approach. *Antiquity* 74:576-580.

Morris, Ian

1991 The archaeology of ancestors: The Saxe/Goldstein hypothesis revisited.  
*Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 1(2): 147-169.

Harke, Heinrich

2002 Interdisciplinarity and the archaeological study of death. *Mortality* 7(3):340-341.

Pearson, Mike Parker

1993 The powerful dead: Archaeological relationships between the living and the dead.  
*Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 3(2): 203-229.

Week 15 (April 18)

Final Thoughts/ Oral Presentation of Research Papers.