

# Archaeological Theory

ANTHROPOLOGY 386  
DR. JAMES M. SKIBO

## General Information

Office: Schroeder Hall Room 341 Phone: 438-7397 Email: jmskibo@ilstu.edu  
Credit Hours: 3

**Prerequisites:** Undergraduates

Anth 274, Principles of Archaeology

## Course Description

This course introduces archaeological method and theory from 1800 to the present, emphasizing American archaeology. The historical development of method and theory is covered as are the contemporary theoretical positions.

## Required Textbooks

None. Weekly readings will be on reserve at Milner or can be accessed online

## Recommended Textbooks (Several chapters taken from each book)

Skibo, James, M., and Michael Brian Schiffer  
2008 *People and Things: A Behavioral Approach*. Springer, New York

O'Brien, Michael J., R. Lee Lyman, and Michael B. Schiffer  
2005 *Archaeology as Process: Processualism and its Progeny*. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City

Hodder, Ian  
2001 *Archaeological Theory Today*. Polity Press, Cambridge

Schiffer, Michael Brian  
2000 *Social Theory in Archaeology*. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, Utah.

## Course Objectives

The course has four objectives:

1. To acquaint each student with the development of archaeological method and theory.
2. To introduce contemporary debates in archaeological theory.

3. To develop writing and oral skills
4. To provide students with the background to for more specialized training in archaeology.

## Assignments and Requirements

### Undergraduates and Graduates

1. **Class Participation.** All reading assignments must be completed prior to class and each student must be prepared to discuss, debate and question in class.

2. **Profile of an Archaeologist.** Each student must investigate the contributions of one of the following archaeologists (other names can be used with my approval). A 10 to 15 page paper must be prepared that describes the persons professional life. A good paper should include a review of what the person investigated, what they wrote, where they were trained, their perspectives on method and theory, and what other archaeologists said about their work.

L. Binford, J. Brown, M. Conkey, K. Deagon, R. Dunnell, K. Flannery, R. Gould, B. Hayden, I. Hodder, M. Leone, W. Longacre, W. Rathje, C. Renfrew, S. South, M. Schiffer, D.H. Thomas, B. Trigger, P. J. Watson, G. Willey, A. Wylie

Following the completion of this paper, each student must prepare a short class presentation.

3. **Book Review.** Each student must prepare a 10-15 page report of a book from the following list (books can be substituted with my permission).

Besides providing a concise profile of the book, please answer at least these questions as you prepare you review:

1. What was the author's intent behind the book? Did she or he state it explicitly, or did you have to infer it? Does the book have a clear central thesis?
2. If the author uses data in your book, then discuss what it is and how it was applied to the theoretical questions being asked?
3. How does the theoretical approach compare and contrast with other theories discussed in class. Try to incorporate the readings from the class or other readings in your discussion.
4. Was the author clear, concise, and easy to follow?
5. Would you read other things by this author?

Arthur, J. W.

2006 LIVING WITH POTTERY. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

Bentley, R. A., and H. D. G. Maschner

2003 COMPLEX SYSTEMS AND ARCHAEOLOGY: EMPIRICAL AND THEORETICAL APPLICATIONS. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

Binford, Lewis

1989 DEBATING ARCHAEOLOGY. Academic Press, NY.

2001 CONSTRUCTING FRAMES OF REFERENCE: AN ANALYTICAL METHOD FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORY BUILDING. University of California Press, Berkeley.

- Cameron, C.  
2009 *INVISIBLE CITIZENS: CAPTIVES AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES*. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.
- Carr, Christopher, ed  
1989 *FOR CONCORDANCE IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS*, Bridging Data, Structure, Quantitative Technique, and Theory. Waveland Press, Prospect Heights, IL.
- Cherry, John, Chris Scarre, and Stephen Shennan, editors  
2004 *EXPLAINING SOCIAL CHANGE: STUDIES IN HONOUR OF COLIN RENFREW*. McDonald Institute Monographs, Oxbow Books, Oxford, UK.
- Chilton, E.  
1999 *MATERIAL MEANINGS*. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.
- Christenson, Andrew, ed.  
1989 *TRACING ARCHAEOLOGY'S PAST*. The Historiography of Archaeology. Southern Illinois U. Press, Carbondale.
- Deal, Michael  
1998 *POTTERY ETHNOARCHAEOLOGY IN THE CENTRAL MAYA HIGHLANDS*. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.
- DeMarrais, Elizabeth, Chris Gosden, and Colin Renfrew  
2004 *RETHINKING MATERIALITY. THE ENGAGEMENT OF MIND WITH THE MATERIAL WORLD*. McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, Cambridge, UK
- Diaz-Andreu, Margarita, Sam Lucy, Stana Babit, and David N. Edwards  
2005 *THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF IDENTITY. APPROACHES TO GENDER, AGE, STATUS, ETHNICITY, AND RELIGION*. Routledge, London.
- Dobres, Marcia-Anne  
2000 *TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL AGENCY*. Blackwell, Oxford.
- Feinman, Gary M., and T. Douglas Price, editors  
2001 *ARCHAEOLOGY AT THE MILLENNIUM*. Plenum Publishers, NY
- Feinman, Gary M. and Linda Manzanilla  
2000 *CULTURAL EVOLUTION. CONTEMPORARY VIEWPOINTS*. Plenum Publishers, NY.
- Feinman, Gary M., and Linda M. Nicholas  
2004 *ARCHAEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON POLITICAL ECONOMIES*. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.
- Funari, Pedro Paulo, Andrés Zarankin, and Emily Stovel, editors  
2005 *GLOBAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORY. CONTEXTUAL VOICES AND CONTEMPORARY THOUGHTS*. Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, New York.
- Gero, Joan and Margaret Conkey, eds.  
1991 *ENGENDERING ARCHAEOLOGY*. Women and Prehistory. Basil Blackwell, Oxford, UK.
- Gould, Richard A.  
1990 *RECOVERING THE PAST*, U. New Mexico Press, Albuquerque
- Günter Bräuer, Fred H. Smith  
1988 *CONTINUITY OR REPLACEMENT: CONTROVERSIES IN HOMO SAPIENS EVOLUTION*. Rotterdam, Netherlands.
- Hall, Martin, and Stephen W. Silliman  
2006 *HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY*. Blackwell Publishing, Malden, MA.
- Hodder, I.  
1992 *THEORY AND PRACTICE IN ARCHAEOLOGY*. Routledge, London.  
1999 *THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROCESS*. Blackwell, Oxford.  
2004 *ARCHAEOLOGY BEYOND DIALOGUE*. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.
- Inomata, Takeshi, and Lawrence S. Coben, editors  
2006 *ARCHAEOLOGY OF PERFORMANCE. THEATERS OF POWER, COMMUNITY, AND POLITICS*. AltaMira Press, Lanham, MD.
- Joyce, Rosemary A.  
2002 *The Languages of Archaeology. Dialogue, Narrative, and Writing*. Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, UK
- Kehoe, Alice Beck  
1998 *THE LAND OF PREHISTORY. A CRITICAL HISTORY OF AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY*.

- Routledge, NY.
- Kent, Susan, ed.  
1987 METHOD AND THEORY FOR ACTIVITY AREA RESEARCH. Columbia U. Press
- Kramer, C.  
1997 POTTERY IN RAJASTHAN: ETHNOARCHAEOLOGY IN TWO INDIAN CITIES. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.
- Lamberg-Karlofsky, C.C, ed.  
1989 ARCHAEOLOGICAL THOUGHT IN AMERICA. Cambridge U. Press, NY.
- Longacre, W. A., and J.M. Skibo  
1994 KALINGA ETHNOARCHAEOLOGY. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.
- Meskill, Lynn, editor  
2005 ARCHAEOLOGIES OF MATERIALITY. Blackwell Publishing, Malden, MA.
- Meltzer, D.J. et al., eds.  
1986 AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY PAST AND FUTURE. A Celebration of the SAA, 1935-85. Smithsonian Press.
- Moore, Jenny and Eleanor Scott, eds.  
1997 INVISIBLE PEOPLE AND PROCESSES. WRITING GENDER AND CHILDHOOD INTO EUROPEAN ARCHAEOLOGY. Leicester University Press, London.
- Nelson, Sarah M.  
1997 GENDER IN ARCHAEOLOGY. Analyzing Power and Prestige. Altamira Press, Walnut Creek, CA
- O'Brien, M.  
1996 EVOLUTIONARY ARCHAEOLOGY. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.
- O'Brien, M. J., and R. L. Lyman  
2003 STYLE, FUNCTION, AND TRANSMISSION: EVOLUTIONARY ARCHAEOLOGY PERSPECTIVES. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.
- Orser, Charles  
2001 RACE AND THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF IDENTITY. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.  
2007 THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF RACE AND RACIALIZATION IN HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY. University Press of Florida, Gainesville.
- Patterson, Thomas C.  
1995 TOWARD A SOCIAL HISTORY OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE UNITED STATES. Harcourt Brace College Publishers, Philadelphia
- Peregrine, P. et al.  
2008 ANCIENT HUMAN MIGRATIONS. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City
- Pinsky, V and Wylie, A., eds.  
1989 CRITICAL TRADITIONS IN CONTEMPORARY ARCHAEOLOGY. Cambridge U Press.
- Preucel, Robert W., ed.  
1991 PROCESSUAL AND POSTPROCESSUAL ARCHAEOLOGIES, Multiple Ways of Knowing the Past. Center for Archaeological Investigations, SIU Occasional Paper No. 10.
- Pyburn, K. Anne, editor  
2004 UNGENDERING CIVILIZATION. Routledge, New York.
- Ramenofsky, A. and A. Steffen  
1998 UNIT ISSUES IN ARCHAEOLOGY. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.
- Renfrew, C. and E. Zubrow, eds.  
1994 THE ANCIENT MIND. Cambridge U. Press, NY.
- Reyman, Jonathan, ed.  
1992 REDISCOVERING OUR PAST: ESSAYS ON THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY. Avebury, Ashgate Publishing Co., Brookfield, VT.
- Schiffer, M. B.  
1987 FORMATION PROCESSES OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.  
1992 TECNOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON BEHAVIORAL CHANGE. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.  
1995 BEHAVIORAL ARCHAEOLOGY: FIRST PRINCIPLES. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.  
1999 THE MATERIAL LIFE OF HUMAN BEINGS: ARTIFACTS, BEHAVIOR AND COMMUNICATION.

- Routledge, New York.  
 2000 SOCIAL THEORY IN ARCHAEOLOGY. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.  
 2001 ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.
- Shimada, I.  
 2007 CRAFT PRODUCTION IN COMPLEX SOCIETIES. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.
- Scott, E. M.  
 1994 THOSE OF LITTLE NOTE: GENDER, RACE, AND CLASS IN HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.
- Skibo, J., and G. Feinman  
 1999 POTTERY AND PEOPLE. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City
- Skibo, J. M. Graves, and M. Stark  
 2007 ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY: PERSPECTIVES ON METHOD AND THEORY. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.
- Skibo, J., W. Walker and A. Nielsen, eds.,  
 1995 EXPANDING ARCHAEOLOGY. U. Utah Press.
- Stark, Miriam T., ed.  
 1998 THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF SOCIAL BOUNDARIES. Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.
- Stein, G.  
 1999 RETHINKING WORLD SYSTEMS THEORY: DIASPORAS, COLONIES, AND INTERACTIONS IN URUK, MESOPOTAMIA. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.
- Sullivan, A. P.  
 2008 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONCEPTS FOR THE STUDY OF THE CULTURAL PAST. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.
- Ucko, Peter J., ed.  
 1995 THEORY IN ARCHAEOLOGY. A World Perspective. Routledge, London,
- VanPool, T. L., and C. S. VanPool  
 2003 ESSENTIAL TENSIONS IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHOD AND THEORY. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.
- Whitley, David S., editor  
 1998 READER IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORY. Post-Processual and Cognitive Approaches. Routledge, NY.
- White, N.M., L. P. Sullivan and R. A. Marrinan, eds.  
 1999 GRIT-TEMPERED. EARLY WOMEN ARCHAEOLOGISTS IN THE SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES. University Press of Florida, Gainesville.
- Wylie, Alison  
 2002 THINKING FROM THINGS: ESSAYS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF ARCHAEOLOGY. University of California Press, Berkeley.
- Yoffee, N. and A. Sherratt, eds.  
 1993, ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORY: WHO SETS THE AGENDA? Cambridge U. Press, NY.

## **Graduate Students Additional Requirements**

**Additional Weekly Reading and Discussion.** One graduate student per week will be asked to do a minimum of 3 additional readings on the topics being discussed. These readings can be obtained from the references in the week's assigned readings or they can be tracked down independently. The student will then make a short presentation of the additional reading as part of the class period. They will also be responsible for leading the discussion for that class period.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

	<b>Undergraduates</b>	<b>Graduates</b>
Profile of an Archy	75	75
Book Review	75	75
Class Participation	75	75
Additional Reading/ Lead class discussion		75

**Required Readings and Schedule** All readings will be on reserve in Milner or will be available online

**Week 1:** Introduction to Course. What is archaeological theory?

Hegmon, Michelle

2003 Setting theoretical egos aside: Issues and theory in North American archaeology. *American Antiquity* 68: 213-243.

Schiffer, Michael

1988 The structure of archaeological theory. *American Antiquity* 53:461-485.

2000 Social Theory in Archaeology: Building Bridges. In *Social Theory in Archaeology*, pp. 1-13. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

**Week 2:** Culture History/Critiques of Culture History

McKern, Clark

1914 The Midwestern Taxonomic Method as an Aid to Archaeological Culture Study. *American Antiquity* 4:301-313.

O'Brien, Michael et al.

2005 The "old" archaeology. In *Archaeology as Process: Processualism and its Progeny*, pp. 8-35. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City

Taylor, Walter

1948 *A study of archaeology*. American Anthropological Association Memior 69. Menasha, Wisc. **Chapters 3-4** (There are more recent editions by other publishers and they are OK to read).

**Week 3** Processual Archaeology

Binford, L. R.

1962 Archaeology as Anthropology. *American Antiquity* 28:217-225

Hill, James

1968 Broken K Pueblo: Patterns of form and function. In *New perspectives in archaeology*, pp. 103-142, edited by S. Binford and L. Binford. Aldine Publishing, Chicago.

Longacre, W.A.

1968 Some aspects of prehistoric society in east-central Arizona. In *New perspectives in archaeology*, pp. 89-102, edited by S. Binford and L. Binford. Aldine Publishing, Chicago.

O'Brien, Michael et al

2005 A new perspective in arch(a)eology, The first processualist case studies (Chapters 2 and 3). In *Archaeology as Process: Processualism and its Progeny*, pp. 36-91. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City

#### **Week 4** Post Processual Archaeology/Critiques

Hodder, I.

1985 Postprocessual archaeology. *Advances in Archeological Method and Theory* 8: 1-26. Edited by Michael B. Schiffer, University of Arizona Press.

O'Brien, Michael et al.

2005 Fall from Grace (Chapter 8). In *Archaeology as Process: Processualism and its Progeny*, pp. 219-252. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

VanPool, C.S., and T. L. VanPool

1999 The scientific nature of postprocessualism. *American Antiquity* 64:33-53.

#### **Week 5** Behavioral Archaeology/Formation Processes

La Motta and Schiffer

2002 Behavioral Archaeology: Toward a New Synthesis. In *Archaeological Theory Today*, pp. 14-64. Polity Press, Cambridge.

Schiffer, Michael B.

1975 Archaeology as a behavioral science. *American Anthropologist* 77:864-869.

1983 Toward the identification of formation processes. *American Antiquity* 48:675-706.

Skibo, J. M., and M. B. Schiffer

2008 People and things (Chapter 1). In *People and Things: A Behavioral Approach to Material Culture*, pp. 1-16. Springer, New York.

Walker, Skibo and Nielson

1995 Introduction. Expanding Archaeology, in *Expanding Archaeology*, edited by Skibo, Walker and Nielson, pp.1-12. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

## **Week 6** Ethnoarchaeology and Experimental Archaeology

Arnold, Philip J.

2000 Working without a net recent trends in ceramic ethnoarchaeology. *Journal of Archaeological Research* 8(2):105-133.

Beck, M. and M. Hill

2004 Rubbish, relatives, and residence: The family use of middens. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 11:297-333.

Skibo, James M.

2008 Archaeological theory and snake-oil peddling: The role of ethnoarchaeology in archaeology. In *Ethnoarchaeology* 1:##-##.

## **Week 7** Darwinian Archaeology/Selectionism

Leonard, R. D.

2001 Evolutionary Archaeology. In *Archaeological Theory Today*, pp. 65-97. Polity Press, Cambridge

O'Brien, M. J., T.D. Holland, R.J. Hoard, and G. L. Fox

1994 Evolutionary implications of design and performance characteristics of prehistoric pottery. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 1: 259-304.

Schiffer, M. B.

1996 Some relationships between evolutionary archaeology and behavioral archaeology. *American Antiquity* 61: 643-662.

## **Week 8** Agency/Practice/Materiality

Dobres, Macia-Ann, and John E. Robb

2005 "Doing" Agency: Introductory remarks on methodology. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 12:159-166.

Pauketat, T., and S. Alt

2005 Agency in a post-mold. *Archaeological Method and Theory* 12: 213-237.

Meskill, Lynn

2001 Archaeologies of Identity. In *Archaeological Theory Today*, edited by I. Hodder, pp. 187-213. Polity Press, Cambridge.

Skibo, J. M. and M. B. Schiffer

2008 Behavior, selection, agency, practice, and beyond. In *People and Things*, pp. 17-34. Springer, New York.

**Week 9** Spring Break

**Week 10** Presentations: Profile of an Archaeologist

**Week 11** Complexity and Political Economy

Stein, Gil

Arnold, Jeanne

2000 Revisiting power, labor rights, and kinship: Archaeology and social theory. In Schiffer text

Feinman, Gary

2000 Corporate/Network. In Schiffer text.

Sampeck, Katherine

**Week 12** Historical Archaeology

Yentsch, Anne and Mary C. Beaudry

2002 American material culture...Hodder text

Godsen Chris

2002 Postcolonial archaeology...Hodder text

Scott, Elizabeth

(2001) "An Indolent Slothfull Set of Vagabonds:" Ethnicity and Race in a Colonial Fur-Trading Community. In *Race and the Archaeology of Identity*, edited by Charles E. Orser, Jr., pp. 14-33. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

**Week 13** SAA Meeting/Work on Book Review

**Week 14** Social Class, Power, and Political Systems: Marxism

McGuire, R., and P. Reckner

2002 The unromantic West: Labor, capital, and struggle. *Historical Archaeology* 36(3): 44-58.

Paynter, R.

1988 Steps to an archaeology of capitalism: Material change and class analysis. In *The Recovery of Meaning: Historical Archaeology in the Eastern United*

*States*, edited by M. Leone and P. B. Potter, pp. 407-433. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D. C.

Trigger, B.

1993 Marxism in contemporary western archaeology. In *Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory*, edited by M. B. Schiffer, pp. 159-200. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

### **Week 15** Evolutionary Ecology and Bio-Archaeology

Kelly, R. L.

2000 Elements of a behavioral ecological paradigm for the study of prehistoric hunter-gatherers. In *Social Theory in Archaeology*, edited by M. B. Schiffer, pp. 63-78. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

Kuhn, S. L., and C. Sarther

2000 Food, lies, and paleoanthropology: Social theory and the evolution of sharing in humans. In *Social Theory in Archaeology*, edited by M. B. Schiffer, pp. 79-96. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

Smith, Maria Ostendorf

2003 Beyond Palisades: The Nature and Frequency of Late Prehistoric Deliberate Violent Trauma in the Chickamauga Reservoir of East Tennessee. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 121:303-318

2006 Treponemal Disease in the Middle Archaic to Early Woodland Periods of the Western Tennessee River Valley. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 131:205-217.

### **Week 16** Gender

Conkey, M.

2007 Questioning theory: Is there a gender of theory in archaeology. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 14:285-310.

Scott, Elizabeth

1994 Through the Lens of Gender: Archaeology, Inequality, and Those of Little Note. In *Those of Little Note: Gender, Race, and Class in Historical Archaeology*, edited by Elizabeth M. Scott, pp. 3-24. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Wylie, A.

2007 Doing archaeology as a feminist. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 14:209-216.

