

ANP 461/3 Laboratory Methods in Historical Archaeology

Spring 2016

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Course Description

This course emphasizes the role that artifacts play in the interpretation of archaeological sites of the historic period. Artifacts have the potential to reveal a diverse range of information about the cultural affiliations, social status, economic status, and more about a historic population, and they are one of the most abundant forms of evidence for historical sites. Understanding how artifacts were used and then discarded are important to interpreting chronology, status, group composition, culture change, and other topics of interest to archaeologists. In order to do this level of interpretation, it is important that one can identify them and understand what information they can offer.

An important aspect of this course will be using digital methods to improve our interpretations, exhibition and sharing of historical artifacts. Students will gain experience using a range of traditional and digital methods for doing this work.

Course Goals

1. Students will be able to identify, describe and classify historic period artifacts
2. Students will use information gleaned from artifacts to create interpretations of historic sites, including those found on MSU's campus.
3. Students will gain first hand experience using artifacts and archives to interpret behavior in the past, and explain the challenges of using these materials
4. Students will learn to use digital and traditional methods to aid in the interpretation, exhibition and sharing of artifacts online.

Course Format and Requirements

Participation: Since the focus of the class is on the identification and analysis of historic artifacts, it is organized by groups of artifacts based on form and function. Through a combination of lecture, discussion, and laboratory sessions, students will gain an understanding of what these objects are, how they help us interpret the past, and will gain valuable first hand experience. Due to the format of the course, attendance is mandatory.

Readings: Each week, students will be assigned readings that they must have completed prior to class. Students should bring comments and questions from these readings into class. In addition to this, each student will be in charge of leading discussions throughout the course.

Assignments: Students will develop an artifact guide for themselves and online as a tool for themselves and for future reference. This will require short summaries about types of artifacts and how they are identified. More information about these assignments will be given on the first day of class.

Exams: Students will be given three exams- two practical laboratory exams and one final exam consisting of multiple choice and a short essay.

Final Project: Each student will create an original artifact classification using either archaeological or modern collections. These will be written up in a short report and will be presented on the last day to the class. More details about the project will be given later.

Schedule

Week 1

Class 1: Introduction

Class 2: Class 1: What is historical archaeology?

Readings

Hall, Martin and Stephen W. Silliman, eds. 2006. Introduction: Archaeology of the Modern World. *In* Historical Archaeology. Pp. 1-19.

Assignment

What do you know about MSU's history and heritage?

Week 2

Class 1: MSU Archaeology

Reading

Lewis, K. 2010. "Function, Circumstance, and the Archaeological Record: The Elusive Past at Saints' Rest". *Beneath the Ivory Tower*, 2010, Edited by Russell Skowronek and Kenneth E. Lewis, University Press of Florida: Gainesville, Florida

Class 2: Illustrating Artifacts

Landin, Jennifer 2015. Rediscovering the Forgotten Benefits of Drawing
<http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/symbiartic/rediscovering-the-forgotten-benefits-of-drawing/>

BAJR Guides

Photography:

<http://www.bajr.org/BAJRGuides/12.%20A%20Short%20Guide%20to%20Digital%20Photography%20in%20Archaeology/DigitalPhotography.pdf>

Illustration: <http://www.bajr.org/BAJRGuides/32.%20Archaeological%20Illustration%20-%20Small%20Finds/Guide32.pdf>

Week 3

Class 1: British and European ceramics

Reading

Barker, David and Teresita Majewski 2006. Ceramic Studies in Historical Archaeology. In The Cambridge Companion to Historical Archaeology, edited by Dan Hicks and Mary C. Beaudry, pp. 205-231. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Selections from Noël Hume, Ivor. 1969. A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.

Class 2: American and Asian ceramics

Reading

Selections from Noël Hume, Ivor. 1969. A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.

Week 4

Class 1: Ceramics analysis

Reading

Miller, George L. 1980 Classification and Economic Scaling of 19th Century Ceramics. Historical Archaeology 14:1-40.

Class 2: Lab exam #1

Week 5

Class 1: Using Ceramics to Interpret the Past

Diana Di Zerega Wall, Sacred Dinners and Secular Teas: Constructing Domesticity in Mid-19th-Century New York. Historical Archaeology. Vol. 25, No. 4, Gender in Historical Archaeology (1991), pp. 69-81

Class 2: Cooking and Cookbooks

Scott, Elizabeth 1997. "A Little Gravy in the Dish and Onions in a Tea Cup": What Cookbooks Reveal about Material Culture. International Journal of Historical Archaeology 1(2):131-155.

Week 6

Class 1: Bottles and glass

Reading

Selections from SHA Bottle Guide Online

Class 2: Bottles and glass

Reading

Busch, Jane. 2000. Second Time Around: A Look at Bottle Reuse, pp. 175-188. Approaches to Material Culture Research for Historical Archaeologists, compiled by David R. Brauner. The Society for Historical Archaeology, California, Pennsylvania.

Week 7

Class 1: Bottles and glass analysis

Readings

Jones, Olive 2000. Glass Bottle Push-ups and Pontil Marks, pp. 149-160. Approaches to Material Culture Research for Historical Archaeologists, compiled by David R. Brauner. The Society for Historical Archaeology, California, Pennsylvania.

Miller, George L. and Catherine Sullivan. 2000 Machine-Made Glass containers and the End of Production for Mouth-Blown Bottles, pp. 161-174. Approaches to Material Culture Research for Historical Archaeologists, compiled by David R. Brauner. The Society for Historical Archaeology, California, Pennsylvania.

Class 2: Cans and metalware

Readings

Rock, James T. 2000. Cans in the Countryside. In Approaches to Material Culture Research for Historical Archaeologists, compiled by David R. Brauner, pp. 275-289. The Society for Historical Archaeology, California, Pennsylvania.

Week 8

Class 1: Lab exam #2

Class 2: Personal items

Readings

Loren, Diana DiPaolo and Mary C. Beaudry. 2006 Becoming American: Small Things Remembered. In Historical Archaeology, edited by Martin Hall and Stephen W. Silliman, pp. 251-271. Blackwell Publishing, Malden, Massachusetts.

David Muraca, John Coombs, Phil Levy, Laura Galke and Paul Nasca 2011. Small Finds, Space, and Social Context: Exploring Agency in Historical Archaeology. *In* Northeast Historical Archaeology Volume 40 | Issue 1 Article 1.

Week 9

Class 1: Spring Break

Class 2: Spring Break

Week 10

Class 1: Toys

Reading

Pritchett, Jack and Allen Pastron 1983. Ceramic Dolls as Chronological Indicators: Implications from a San Francisco Dump Site. In *Forgotten Places and Things: Archaeological Perspectives on American History*, edited by A. E. Ward, pp. 321-334.

Class 2: Children

Reading

Wilkie, Laurie 2000 Not Merely Child's Play: Constructing a Historical Archaeology of Children and Childhood. *Children and Material Culture*.

Week 11

Class 1: Lost Voices

Reading

Theresa A. Singleton 1995. The Archaeology of Slavery in North America. *Annual Review of Anthropology*. Vol. 24 (1995), pp. 119-140

Brock, Terry 2014. All of us would walk together.
<http://hsmcwalktogether.org/index.php/slavery-at-st-marys-manor/>

Class 2: Lost Voices

Reading

Stephen W. Silliman 2005. Culture Contact or Colonialism? Challenges in the Archaeology of Native North America *American Antiquity* Vol. 70, No. 1, pp. 55-74

Week 12

Class 1: Cemetery and funerary artifacts

Reading

Deetz and Dethelson. *Death's Head, Cherub, Urn and Willow*

Cannon, Aubrey 1989 The Historical Dimension in Mortuary Expression of Status and Sentiment. In *Current Anthropology* 30(4): 437-458.

Bigman 2014. Mapping social relationships: geophysical survey of a nineteenth-century American slave cemetery *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences* Volume 6, Issue 1, pp 17-30

Class 2: Cemetery and funerary artifacts

Reading

Edward L. Bell 1990 The Historical Archaeology of Mortuary Behavior: Coffin Hardware from Uxbridge, Massachusetts. *Historical Archaeology* Vol. 24, No. 3 (1990), pp. 54-78

James M. Davidson. Keeping the Devil at Bay: The Shoe on the Coffin Lid and Other Grave Charms in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-century America. *Int J Histor Archaeol* (2010) 14:614–649

Week 13

Class 1: Digital methods

Class 2: Digital methods

Week 14

Class 1: Campus archaeology tour

Class 2: Class presentations

Week 15

Class 1/2: Class presentations

Week 16

Final Exam

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