Core Seminar in Anthropological Archaeology
ANTH 280D
Winter Quarter 2018
Thursday, 3:30-6:20 PM, SSRB 315B

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Description: This seminar examines the theoretical issues central to Anglo-American anthropological archaeology. The primary goal of the course is to contextualize archaeology within the broader field of anthropology. Using a variety of primary sources, we will study the development of archaeological method and theory from the formation of the culture history paradigm during the first decades of the 20th century to the postprocessual approaches that have emerged since the 1980s. Topics to be covered include the use of analogy, the rise of state-level societies, typology and seriation, middle-range theory, evolutionary archaeology, interaction theory, gender studies, hermeneutics, interpretive archaeology, archaeology as social action, and the archaeology of ancient economies.

Evaluation: This course is a seminar. All but the last class session will consist of presentations of assigned articles and discussions of the material (50% of grade). Please read all the papers for Unit 1 and be ready to discuss them during the first class.

Students are also required to write term papers on one of the topics covered in class and listed in the syllabus, with the exception of the first two units. The papers are expected to be the length of a typical journal article (i.e., 25-35 double-spaced pp.). Students must receive approval of their topic before writing the term paper. To this end, a written proposal (about 2 pp. of text plus a 10-item bibliography) outlining the subject matter is due on Thursday, 25 January. The paper itself is due at the beginning of class on Thursday, 8 March. Hardcopy only, please.

Our last meeting will be held on Thursday, 15 March. This meeting is a Final Exam. The meeting will consist of final seminar presentations of the term paper, each of which will be 15 minutes long. The paper proposal, final presentation, and term paper together count for 50% of your grade.

Class Rules: I expect all students to read all the articles and participate fully in all discussions. Remember that participation in each class counts for one half of a letter grade. Please print out your readings and bring them to class along with your notes on them. No computers or cellphones during class, please.

Texts: One text is required for this course; additional readings are drawn from journals and books. You should order the text from your favorite vendor as soon as possible.

Kuhn, T.S.
Unit 1. Prelude: Quo Vadis?


Unit 2. Culture History: Stratigraphy, the Culture-Area Concept, Classification, and Space-Time-Area Dynamics


Unit 3. The New Archaeology: Evolutionary Models, Analogy, Process, and Middle Range Theory


Unit 4: The New Archaeology in Practice: The Evolution of Complexity


Unit 5. Introduction to Postprocessual Archaeology: Pilgrim’s Progress and the Poet of Peterhouse


Unit 6: A Postprocessualist Potpourri: Marxism, Hermeneutics, Deconstruction, and Critical Archaeology


Unit 7: The Archaeology of Gender or Feminist Archaeology?


Unit 8: Keep Your Periphery away from My Core – Interaction Studies, Peer-Polities, and World Systems Theory


Unit 9: What’s Hot and What’s Not – Practice, Agency, and Neo-Evolutionism


Unit 10: Something Brand New: The Archaeology of Social Networks

Readings to be determined later in the course, if there is time.