THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF DEATH

Tuesday and Thursday 10:30-11:45 am, C101 Sakamaki Hall

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Office hours: Thursday 12:00-2:00 pm (462 Moore Hall, Hall, phone 956-8435) and by appointment

From King Tutankhamen’s tomb to Qin’s terracotta army, many of archaeology’s most famous discoveries have been human graves, though they are but a small part of what archaeologists study. We have long recognized that corpses reveal myriad ideas about death and the afterlife, social and political structures, and even what it means to be human. The remains of a person are often the culmination of rites of passage in which the dead are separated from the living and transformed into ancestors, memories, and symbols. In archaeology, burials thus teach us about the beliefs and rituals employed by the living to send the dead to their afterlives. At the same time, a deceased human being’s body is a biological entity that can reveal patterns in ancient diet, nutrition, and disease. This course uses archaeological and anthropological studies of death from societies worldwide and throughout prehistory as our primary reading materials. We will look at death and the body from the perspective of ancient and modern conceptions of mortality, afterlives, and identities. We will study the archaeological dimensions of burial and other death-related rituals, and belief systems about death and the role of the dead in society. Topics include, for instance, skeletal analysis (specifically, paleodiet and paleopathology), tomb construction and elaboration, religious death rituals, and human sacrifice.

Through our readings, writing projects, and class discussions, we will practice increasingly sophisticated methods of critically evaluating others’ scientific arguments and constructing our own multi-disciplinary arguments. Writing assignments aim to critically test models of death rituals and ideology with multiple lines of evidence. They include two essays testing various models against archaeological remains and contemporary death practices and belief systems, and a combined final research project and conference-style presentation or poster based on that research. Students will also collect original data from Oahu cemeteries for comparative purposes in the second writing project. Through these writing projects, we will reflect on how data availability and selection, theoretical perspectives, and analytical techniques shape the interpretations of mortuary evidence. Reflective writing practices developed throughout the course will give students a wide range of tools for critical reading and writing in the sciences.

Course Design & Student Learning Objectives:

We will proceed through a number of progressively complex course units designed to provide you with opportunities to acquire and hone your scholarly abilities in critical reading and writing. In Unit 1: Scientific Argumentation, we will practice critical reading by deconstructing and mapping scientific arguments. Using reading selections from mortuary studies and archaeological methodology, we will compose short response papers, argument outlines and abstracts to practice economizing words, summarizing, using and forwarding others’ contributions to academic research. Unit 2: Human Remains, focuses on two writing tasks: framing your position within an ongoing academic debate, and using others’ written work to formulate hypotheses about skeletal analyses, paleohealth, paleopathology and paleodemography. Unit 3: Rank and Status in Burials makes use of a set of case studies from northern Europe to explore how treatment after death reflects differences in social status, gender, age
groups, and political position within various cultural contexts. We will also practice collecting and analyzing original data from two or three cemeteries' gravestones in Oahu for comparative purposes. These hypothesis formulation and testing skills will be useful for your original final projects.

The final projects apply these lessons to particular case studies that directly connect beliefs and ritual practices related to death within different cultural systems today. In Unit 4: Death for the Living you will be asked to define, defend, contextualize, and develop a research project of interest to you and your workgroup. You will also be asked to collect original data to test your predictions about death rituals and beliefs, and to rigorously analyze your data in various ways. We will also learn to use the power of sophisticated graphical presentation to communicate information in concise and visually captivating manners. These will be important additions to your future written work, as well as the foundation for your contribution to our final presentations at the end of the semester (Unit 5: Presenting Your Work in Public), when you will proudly summarize your final research projects as either a 12-minute oral presentation or a professional research poster. Together, these writing projects give you opportunities to work toward our course objectives, while simultaneously exploring the ways that cross-cultural variability in deathways teaches us about the living participants in final practices that mark the end of life.

Course Practices:
A variety of in-class activity formats will help us to further our collective goals as a class, as well as contribute to your individual objectives as academic writers. These include:

- Small-group workshops: Groups of between two and four students will work together on their texts, focusing on drafting, revision, and editing challenges
- Large-group workshops: We will tackle common issues in drafting and revision, among other topics, as a class – examples or excerpts from students' writing will be the focus of these workshop sessions
- Peer review: As part of revision work, we will discuss and practice giving and receiving feedback to your academic peers (students in your and the other sections of the course).

Assigned Readings:
There are three books assigned for this course:

- The Archaeology of Death and Burial, by Mike Parker Pearson (2000). College Station: Texas A&M University Press. (Abbreviated in course schedule as “Death”)

Those additional assigned readings that are book chapters and journal articles are scanned and posted for you as pdf files in folders on Laulima's Resources page. The full references for optional or suggested journal articles (most can be acquired through the JSTOR database) are included in the course bibliography at the end of the syllabus so that you can properly cite them in your papers. Other optional resources are book chapters, and so more difficult to acquire; most of these are posted as pdf files for you in the “Paper Sources” folder. Students are expected to download, print, and read all assigned articles and book chapters before class. You should bring all assigned readings (as well as your notes or detailed outline of each selection) to our class sessions so that you can refer to them during discussions.

As part of the research process, you will be asked to identify your own sources for the final research project and conference contribution. I am happy to help you identify additional texts relevant to your research interests and paper topics if you have trouble identifying good sources; references cited in the bibliographies of class readings, as well as the recommended readings listed in the syllabus, are good places to start. A research consultation with a librarian is another excellent option available to you at any point during the research and writing process.
Assessment:
Grades will be based on two short (4-6 pages) and one longer (8-10 pages) writing project, as well as a number of smaller exercises. These assignments are designed to give you opportunities to practice critical writing and reading strategies commonly employed in the sciences. For example, you will be asked to outline the rhetorical structure of an argument, and summarize a paper's main points in an abstract. These initial assignments will give you the chance to critically evaluate which reading and note-taking strategies work best for you, and provide you with a set of strategies to explore the relative strengths and weaknesses of others’ arguments. In your three writing projects, you will be asked to explore the relations between theory, model, hypotheses, and evidence embodied in several related texts in increasingly sophisticated manners. The acquisition of these various skills will prepare you to conduct your own project as an “armchair archaeologist.” As part of your final project, you will have the opportunity to collect original data through interviews, archival research, or some other means to test your hypotheses against qualitative and quantitative data sets. Finally, each group of student researchers will summarize the results of their research projects in the form of oral presentations or research posters. In this manner, you will be introduced to several critical modes of communication as well as various rhetorical styles employed in academic discourse through these progressively complex writing projects. Finally, you will practice different methods of soliciting and giving feedback on your paper drafts, such as recording and sharing audio feedback files (oral feedback on writing and revision), providing written feedback and cover letters to peer reviewers, reverse outlining another's draft, and so forth. Completing these tasks as assigned and on time, and being prepared each day to contribute to and participate in class discussions and workshops are required to earn you full credit for the final 15% of your course grade. That said, regular participation in class discussions is more involved.

In our class discussions, what I will seek to create for you is a setting where you can be free to ask questions without fear of censure or ridicule about what you found confusing in the reading, or what knowledge has been assumed that you do not have. Because a key element of your education is the development of critical thinking, this course gives you some tools for taking and defending a position in the intellectual life of academia.

I perceive my role in class discussion as pushing the class toward critical evaluation of the texts, whether our collective readings or examples of student work are on the table. I do not see my role as one of validating all student contributions or celebrating those class members who are brilliant enough to agree with me. I may often challenge the positions students offer in class because I want you to defend them to the fullest rather than because I disagree with the position you are taking, and certainly not because I dislike you personally. I may also call on you to offer your ideas on a topic. This is because I like to hear from everyone, but you should not regard it as a performance test. In my experience, students who do not volunteer their thoughts often have much to offer the class. Finally, I believe that I can only be an effective teacher if I know what you are thinking and where you are struggling with the material or argument. I welcome your thoughts regardless of whether they are a perfectly constructed answer to a question because they help me to focus the class discussion in a way that will be most helpful to learning.

But at the end of the term, I must give you a grade. Your work in each of the five units of the class contributes to the final course grade as follows:

UNIT 1: Writing exercises 10%
UNIT 2: Human remains paper (Writing Project 1) 15%
UNIT 3: Cemetery data collections and analysis report; Rank and status paper (WP2) 30%
UNIT 4: Death for the living paper and presentation (WP3) 30%
Class participation: Final reflections on each writing project, peer review and cover letter, participation in class discussions, etc. 15%

Total: 100%
Attendance Policy:
Attendance and active participation at each class meeting are essential, particularly during both small and large group workshops. If you must miss a class at some point, you should contact me as soon as possible via email or come in during my office hours to review what you missed. It is your responsibility to find out what you missed that day and to obtain copies of any materials distributed in class. If you know in advance that you will be away when an assignment is due, please contact me as soon as possible so that we can discuss the possibility of a different due date.

The primary focus of this seminar is on your writing; therefore, your presence in class is imperative. As you will discover, WI courses are process-oriented. The learning that you do in this course will be directly tied to your involvement in this process, not merely to your production of each of the discrete assignments that you are given. Though you are allowed three absences without penalty (these three absences should be sufficient to cover such events as personal illness or family emergency), you will be penalized for any unexcused absence from a class session during which your written work is to be workshopped by either a small group or the class as a whole. (Please note that major religious holidays are excused absences, though you should notify me of your intended absence well in advance, and request details about the official procedures for obtaining an official excuse, if necessary.) If you miss an additional class period beyond a third absence (without my prior approval), your final grade will be lowered by two points for each additional class missed (i.e., a final grade of 88 would become an 86, etc.). I also expect that you will arrive to class on time and ready to begin work, with hard copies of the readings and your paper drafts in hand. You will be allowed two late arrivals (more than 5 minutes after class has begun) or early departures (more than 5 minutes before the class has been dismissed) for the semester. Each additional late arrival or early departure will count as a class absence, either toward or in addition to your three allowed unexcused absences.

Academic Integrity:
There is no value that is more central to academic discourse in general, and academic writing in particular, than intellectual honesty. One of the primary aspects of such honesty is the recognition of the role that the thoughts and words of others play in the formation of one’s own ideas and opinions and, especially, in the construction of one’s own written arguments. While the model of scholarly “conversation” and the free exchange of ideas to which we will aspire in this course rightly suggests that one ought to learn from, and draw upon, the work of others, this in no way implies that one can simply appropriate such work without proper acknowledgement of its source. The name for such unacknowledged appropriation is “plagiarism.”

Materials on the University's policies regarding academic honesty are posted at the following URL: www.hawaii.edu/student/conduct. It provides conduct guidelines, as well as students’ rights and responsibilities. Please read the student code of conduct carefully. Other websites also offer resources for how to construct bibliographies: one good URL is http://library.duke.edu/research/guides/citing/. Also, I will be sure to address issues relating to the avoidance of plagiarism as they arise. And if you have any questions regarding plagiarism or how to avoid it, please discuss them with me. There is no shame in needing clarification of these issues. However, once you have begun to write a paper, you will be held responsible for abiding by accepted conventions. Most instances of plagiarism arise from ignorance about what constitutes plagiarizing, not from deliberate attempts to pass off another’s work as your own. While I do not require you to follow any particular citation system (APA, MLA, etc.), you are required to choose one and to use it consistently within each writing assignment.

Thus, it is in your own best interest to make sure that you fully understand what is expected of you. Plagiarism, or any other form of cheating, represents a most serious breach of the contract between students and teachers (and between students and their classmates), and if I find that you have willfully plagiarized someone else’s words (or ideas), or cheated on an exam or assignment, you will be failed for the course.
Student Resources:

Several resources at UH are designed to help students during their college careers:

1. Learning Assistance Center: offers workshops on time management, note taking, reading techniques, reading retention, exam writing, and completing a term paper; contact the Learning Assistance Center (Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services Room 312; 956-7927; www.hawaii.edu/osa/CSDC.html) directly for dates and times of workshops.

2. Writing Center: offers help in organizing your papers and editing your written work. You can meet with someone for half an hour to determine your needs, and then schedule additional sessions as needed (Kuykendall Room 402; 956-7619; http://maven.english.hawaii.edu/workshop/index.html).

3. First Year Center: provides advising services about degree requirements and registration; it also acts as a referral service for other campus resources. You can drop in at the First Year Center (Keller Hall Room 305; 956-7273; from 9:00-3:00, Mondays through Fridays).

4. KOKUA Program: offers confidential needs analysis and assistance with classes to students with disabilities. Contact KOKUA (in QLC room 013) at 956-7511, 956-7612, or kokua@hawaii.edu. Any student who feels that he or she may need accommodation because of a disability is invited to contact me privately to discuss those specific needs.

COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Classwork</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1: 8/26</td>
<td>Logistics and goals of course</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/28</td>
<td>Introduction to mortuary studies</td>
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<td>Death chapter 1; Bones chap 1</td>
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<td>Week 2: 9/2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Argument outline</td>
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<td>9/2</td>
<td>&quot;Ancient Graves&quot; video</td>
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<td>Buzon 2006; Chamberlain &amp; Pearson 2001</td>
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<td>9/4</td>
<td>Beyond summaries</td>
<td>Abstract and response paper</td>
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<td>Week 3: 9/9</td>
<td>Defining and excavating deathways, past and present</td>
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<td>Storey 1985; Rewriting Introduction and chap 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/9</td>
<td>Workshop: Revision and editing strategies</td>
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<td>Draft 2 due 6:00 pm</td>
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<td>9/11</td>
<td>Rhetorical moves (intertextuality large-group workshop)</td>
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<td>Intertextuality excerpt due 9/17, 6:00 pm</td>
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<td>9/16</td>
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<td>Draft 2 due 6:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/18</td>
<td></td>
<td>Intertextuality excerpt due 9/17, 6:00 pm</td>
<td>Rewriting chap 2 and 3</td>
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### UNIT 2: Human Remains

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<tr>
<th>Week 5: 9/23</th>
<th>Human remains</th>
<th>Dickson et al. 2005</th>
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<tr>
<td>9/25</td>
<td>Paleohealth and paleopathology</td>
<td>Bones chap 2; Larsen 2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6: 9/30</td>
<td>Ethics and human remains</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/2</td>
<td>Small-group workshop of WP1</td>
<td>--Reverse outline due at noon on 10/1</td>
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<td>Week 7: 10/7</td>
<td>Citation Practices</td>
<td>browse library websites (see External Links on Laulima)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/9</td>
<td>An untimely demise</td>
<td>Bones chap 3 and 4</td>
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### UNIT 3: Rank and Status

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<tr>
<th>Week 8: 10/14</th>
<th>Social complexity and burial contexts</th>
<th>Death chap 4; Hearn 1980; Kirch 1990</th>
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<tr>
<td>10/16</td>
<td>Gravestone analysis; Data collection &amp; analytical strategies</td>
<td>Gorman &amp; DiBlasi 1981; Rainville 1999</td>
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<td>Week 9: 10/21</td>
<td>Cemeteries field trip</td>
<td>Death chap 6</td>
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<td>10/23</td>
<td>Bog bodies exercise (Video: &quot;The Perfect Corpse&quot;)</td>
<td>Levathes 1987; Williams 2003</td>
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<td>Week 10: 10/28</td>
<td>Assessing the strength of evidentiary support</td>
<td>WP2 first draft due Sunday 10/26, noon</td>
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<td>10/30</td>
<td>Death rituals</td>
<td>Gillespie 2001; Raharijaoana &amp; Kus 2001</td>
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### UNIT 4: Death for the Living

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<th>Week 11: 11/4</th>
<th>No class: Election Day</th>
<th>WP2 final draft due 11/4 at 6:00 pm</th>
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<tr>
<td>11/6</td>
<td>Funerary customs</td>
<td>Death chap 7; Elliott 1990</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12: 11/11</td>
<td>No class: Veterans Day</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Readings</td>
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<td>11/18</td>
<td>Small-group workshops of WP3, draft 1; Framing and forwarding your contribution: Introductions and conclusions</td>
<td>WP3 draft 1 due Sunday 11/16, noon</td>
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<td>11/20</td>
<td>Video: “Ancient Egypt: Quest for Immortality”</td>
<td>Bones chap 5; Galvin 2005</td>
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**UNIT 5: Presenting Your Work in Public**

| Week 14: | 11/25-11/27 | Thanksgiving                                          |
|          |             |                                                      |
| Week 15: | 12/2        | A picture’s worth 1,000 words: Communicating graphically |
|          | 12/4        | Death Rituals final project: presentations and posters | WP3 final draft and cover letter due at 6:00 pm |
|          | 12/9        | Death Rituals final project: presentations and posters |

**Required Readings:**


**Additional Recommended Sources for Papers:**


Kuijt, Ian (2001). "Place, death, and the transmission of social memory in early agricultural communities of the Near Eastern Pre-Pottery Neolithic." In Social Memory, Identity, and Death: Anthropological


Small, David B. (2002). “Rethinking the historical dimensions of mortuary practices: A case from Nisky Hill cemetery, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.” In *The Space and Place of Death*, edited by H. Silverman and


**Recommended Video Sources (available for borrowing from me, through Wong AV or ILL):**

*Ancient Graves: Voices of the Dead.* National Geographic Video, 1998. Introduction to mortuary sites from around the world.


*Iceman: Mummy from the Stone Age.* Discovery Channel video. Program about the Austrian Iceman nicknamed “Otzi.”

*Inca Mummies: Secrets of a Lost World.* National Geographic video, 2002. Inca mummies rescued from Vilcabamba region of Peru (last refuge of those Inka fleeing the Spanish conquistadores), and a large burial ground found underneath a modern schoolyard.

*Mummies: Into the Afterlife.* Discovery Channel video, from the “Egypt Uncovered” DVD series, 2001?. Thorough coverage of history of Egyptian mummies, including mummification processes; also includes exploration of 2,000 year old mummy of Artemidorus.


*Peru’s City of Ghosts.* Discovery Channel video, 1999. 2,000 year old Nazca culture from southern Peru.


*Pyramid: The Resurrection Machine.* Discovery Channel video, from the “Egypt Uncovered” DVD series, 2001?. Covers Egyptian pyramid-building era, texts, the Giza workmen’s community, ideology about the afterlife.

*Riddle of the Desert Mummies.* Discovery Channel video, 1999. Mysterious Caucasian mummies found deep in the Xinjiang region of China millennia before Westerners’ presence is recorded in the Far East.