ANT380K (30240) INEQUALITY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Fall 2010

Weds. 2-5pm; EPS 1.128 Instructor: Maria Franklin

Email: mfranklin@mail.utexas.edu

Course Description:

This seminar is a survey of theoretical approaches to the issue of inequality/power/hierarchy in archaeological research and in archaeology as a political practice. We will begin by considering early case studies of archaeological thought on the rise of social and political hierarchy, and status, difference and power, in order to familiarize students with the "roots" of subsequent discourses on inequality in the past (with scholars either building upon or contesting – sometimes both – these early works). During most of the semester we will focus on the various trajectories that contemporary archaeologists have taken in theorizing inequality as they've sought to explain or interpret the myriad range of sites, cultures, and time periods that now represent the field. Rather than organize the seminar by regions or theoretical frameworks, the topics are organized roughly by the kinds of societies and issues that scholars have typically, though not exclusively, evaluated when considering power relations. The rationale here is to give students some sense of the range of approaches, including competing ones, that can be applied to similar case studies. The relationships between theory, site, method, scale of analysis, and research objective(s) should be discussed as the semester unfolds.

This seminar's objective is to also critically assess archaeology's role in contemporary social and political discourses and practices. This occurs in two interrelated spheres: 1) within the discipline itself with respect to knowledge production, unequal relations between practitioners, etc., and 2) between archaeologists and the societies within which we work. An intention of this seminar is to get participants to think about the ways in which our scholarship on inequality in the past can and should be considered relevant to archaeology's role in today's world.

Course Requirements:

My goal is to try and help create a collective, engaged, and mutually beneficial seminar experience for participants. Some of the elements of a traditional seminar will be retained (reading assignments, instructor as partial moderator of discussions, and, of course, instituting requirements and grading). But the majority of the semester will require a cooperative effort between everyone every week. The major assignments will be for each participant to create a Wikipedia article on some aspect of archaeology and inequality, and to give advice to others on their wiki projects. The objectives here are twofold: 1) to use the classroom as a vehicle for producing knowledge on archaeology that is publicly accessible, and importantly, subject to potential contestation and revision by others, and 2) to provide a forum for more active, collaborative, and critical knowledge production as a class and not solely as individuals working apart. The Wikipedia pages will start off on our class wiki site where each of us, over the semester, will be required to constructively comment on and suggest revisions for each page.

This we will do via the blog space on our site. The secondary assignment concerns readings and discussions. Two or more people will co-lead each discussion, with input from the rest of the class on proposing questions and issues based on the readings. The co-discussants will consult the blogs and produce a handout to help structure our discussion. These requirements mean that all of us need to stay on top of the readings, posting and reading blogs, and reviewing and updating wiki pages on a weekly basis.

Regarding Wikipedia topics: Please pick a new topic to add to Wikipedia rather than update an existing article. The article that you write must link to existing articles and at least some of those created by your peers. Be sure to investigate Wikipedia thoroughly to ensure that your proposed topic and/or the article content will not duplicate ones already posted.

Grading Criteria:

- 1. Final Wikipedia article (including presentation and posting to Wikipedia) = 50 points Note: Participants are required to meet the deadlines listed (in italics) in the schedule below in constructing their wiki pages.
- 2. Co-lead two discussion sections (produce handouts; select one reading) = 10 points
- 3. Weekly blogging on readings (due the Monday before each discussion date beginning Aug. 30) = 20 points
- 4. Weekly blogging on wiki pages (starting on October 11) = 20 points

Please note that the subject matter for blogging is not limited to what's required. Feel free to blog asking for specific kinds of feedback on your wiki page, to critique particular readings, and so on. Also note that the wiki pages and blog space are viewable by the public. If you wish to remain anonymous, take this into consideration when choosing a username.

Blackboard: Grades, handouts, the syllabus, and readings will be posted on Blackboard at http://courses.utexas.edu.

Students with disabilities: You may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

8/25 Introduction to seminar.

*Required weekly blogs on readings (due the Monday before each discussion date beginning 8/30/2010 to 11/15/2010)

9/1 Overviews of various theories of inequality

Ames, Kenneth M. "The Archaeology of Rank." <u>Handbook of Archaeological Theories</u>. Eds. R. Alexander Bentley, Herbert D. G. Maschner and Christopher Chippindale. vols. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2008. 487-513.

- Brumfiel, Elizabeth M. "Factional Competition and Political Development in the New World: An Introduction." <u>Factional Competition and Political Development in the New World</u>. Eds. Elizabeth M. Brumfiel and John W. Fox. vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 3-13.
- Dornan, Jennifer L. "Agency and Archaeology: Past, Present, and Future Directions." <u>Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory</u> 9.303-329 (2002).
- Hayden, Brian. "Richman, Poorman, Beggarman, Chief: The Dynamics of Social Inequality."

 <u>Archaeology at the Millenium: A Sourcebook.</u> Eds. Gary M. Feinman and T. Douglas Price.

 New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2001. 231-72.
- Miller, Daniel, Michael Rowlands, and Christopher Tilley. "Introduction." <u>Domination and Resistance</u>. Eds. Daniel Miller, Michael Rowlands and Christopher Tilley. London: Routledge, 1989. 1-26.
- Paynter, Robert. "The Archaeology of Equality and Inequality." <u>Annual Review of Anthropology</u>.18 (1989): 369-99.

Suggested reading:

Trigger, Bruce G. "Marxism in Contemporary Western Archaeology." <u>Archaeological Method and Theory</u> 5 (1993): 159-200.

9/8 2:00-3:00pm: Meet at LAITS (MEZ 2.120) for Wiki workshop.

Required readings on Wikipedia:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:About

 $http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:About \#Wikipedia_content_criteria$

Search the topics below and read:

Archaeology

Feminist archaeology (note the critique of this article at the top of the page)

Archaeological theory

Social stratification

Also read:

http://kairosnews.org/developing-a-wikipedia-research-policy

Posted on Blackboard: successfulWIKIpage

9/15 Complexity and Status Hierarchies

Due date: submission, via email to Franklin before class, of two tentative topics for Wikipedia page. We will all pitch in to help individuals pick which ones to consider further.

9/17 Please be sure to blog on everyone's proposed topic. The kind of feedback that will be helpful should consider the following: can the topic be linked to a number of other existing Wikipedia pages, is it a subject that people are likely to do a search of, does it duplicate too

closely an already existing Wikipedia (or other web source) page, is the topic too broad/general or too specific? This will give everyone a chance to revise or pick another topic based upon advice from the group.

- 9/22 State Societies
- 9/24 Due date: submission of abstract and preliminary bibliography.
- 9/29 Non-state Societies
- 10/6 Identity, Difference and Power

10/8 Due date: outline of wiki page completed with introduction, subject headings, preliminary bibliography and links to other sites.

*Required weekly blogs on peers' wiki pages from 10/11/2010 to 11/24/2010.

10/13 Culture Contact, Plural Societies

*Required weekly updates to wiki pages from 10/15/10 to 11/19/2010.

- 10/20 Class Conflicts in the Historic Past
- 10/27 Households and Communities
- 11/3 Review of course content; discussion of progress on Wikipedia pages.
- 11/10 Archaeology's Inequalities
- 11/17 Inequality and the Contested Grounds of Heritage Sites
- 11/24 No class.
- 12/1 Presentations on Wikipedia pages.

During this time we will also discuss how best to organize the various wikis into Wikipedia, as some may work better grouped with others.

12/12 Due date: wiki pages posted in Wikipedia.