

DIGGING THE PAST: INTRODUCTION TO ARCHAEOLOGY

ANTH 1400/CLAS 3210 Tuesdays/Thursdays 9:30-10:45 am
codes 36952 and 47958 James Hall Room 5305

Information

Prerequisite: None

Location: in person

Instructors: Prof. Kelly M. Britt (she/her)

Email: kellym.britt@brooklyn.cuny.edu

Office/Class: in-person

Student Hours (formerly Office Hours):

Wednesdays 9 to noon in Ingersoll Hall Ext. Room 538 or by Zoom and/or appointment. (Not open to students who are enrolled in or have completed Anthropology 20 or 2400 or Classics 2.2 or 19 or 3210 or 60).

Class Format

A class discussion with lectures on weekly topics in reference to specific themes will be the main format of the class. Students are expected to do all required reading and contribute to in-class discussions.

Important Dates

Aug 28-start of Fall 2024 semester

Aug 29-first day of class for ANTH 1400/CLAS 3210

Sep-College Closed

Sep 3-last day to add/swap a course for Fall

Oct 2-4-No Classes

Oct 11-12-No Classes

Oct 14-College Closed

Oct 15-Conversion Day-Monday Schedule

Nov 6-last day to withdraw with a W grade

Nov 27-Conversion Day-Friday Schedule

Nov 28-19-College Closed-Thanksgiving Break

Nov 30-Dec 1-No Classes

Dec 12-Last day of class for ANTH 1400/CLAS 3210

Dec 14-Last day of Classes for Fall Semester

Dec 15-21-Finals

Assignment Due Dates:

Reading Reflections-Each Class

Quiz 1: September 10

Quiz 2: October 17

Quiz 3: October 29

Quiz 4: November 19

Quiz 5: December 5

Object Biography-Last Class/Date of Final-Dec 17



Course Description

How do we know what we believe to know about the past? This class will dive into this question by introducing students to archaeology, a sub-discipline of anthropology that explores the human past through materiality. An overview of archaeological method and theory and current approaches to the practice in a postcolonial lens will be central to the course. Topics will include history of the discipline, how societies were organized, subsistence patterns, technology and trade, and analytical approaches. In addition, the course will explore some of the present issues within the field of archaeology such as site stewardship, professional ethics, activism, relationships between archaeologists and stakeholders of the past, as well as the display of culture to the general public. Class will use lectures, class discussions, reading materials, visual media, and guest lectures to explore the topics discussed above. This class will *not* be a survey course of archaeological sites.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrates understanding of anthropological concepts of human diversity, past and present.
2. Demonstrates critical thinking in writing and communication.

Anticipated Outcomes for this Course:

- Students will be able to identify key terminology, theories, theoretical orientations, methods and perspectives in archaeology.
- Students will be able to compare and contrast scientific knowledge with other ways of knowing and be able to apply scientific knowledge to the study of the past.
- Students will be able to discuss the development of archaeology and the fundamentals of human history.
- Students will be able to identify the principles of archaeological investigation and the discuss the theory and method of excavation.
- Students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking in writing and communication about main ideas of archaeological method and theory through a postcolonial lens that draws on readings, exhibits, and class discussions.

Requirements & Expectations

Attendance and participation are mandatory. Students must notify via email PRIOR TO CLASS for their absence to be excused. In case of religious holidays, student must inform professor ahead of time about classes missed, and arrangements will be made for make-up work or alternative assignments.

Required Texts

This is an Open Educational Resources Course and all required readings are online.

<https://diggingthepast.commons.gc.cuny.edu/>

Advising for Anthropology Majors and Minors

Professor Schiller is the advisor for anthropology majors and minors. If you're an anthropology major or minor or are interested in becoming one, you can make an appointment to meet with Professor Schiller here: https://brooklyn-cuny.campus.eab.com/pal/VUZRo_yqfq or by email, nschiller@brooklyn.cuny.edu She has open advising hours every Tuesday and by appointment. Her email is nschiller@brooklyn.cuny.edu.

Class Requirements:	
Reading Reflections	25
Object Biography	25
Quizzes (5 10pt/each)	50
Total points:	100

- Specific requirements for assignments will be discussed in class and posted to Blackboard.
- We will have a **Grading Contract**-for portions of the assignments based on the labor of your work. Complete the work satisfactorily receive credit. This will be discussed more in class and on BB.
- Options for revisions of written assignments available-requirements will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard.
- Extra credit will be given and instructions discussed in class and posted to Blackboard.
- **Guidelines of Engagement and Classroom Etiquette will be created together democratically during first class and posted to Blackboard**

Grading scale will be as follows:

Letter	Percentage
A+	above 98
A	98-93
A-	92-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-67
D	66-63
D-	62-60
F	59-0

Attendance and Participation Policy: This is an introductory course and attendance and participation are required and is worth a total of 25 points. This will be assessed through your reading reflections. I will grant an excused absence only in the case of a documented medical emergency (i.e., intake form from a medical professional). Please see the **Brooklyn College Undergraduate Bulletin 2024-25** pg. 68 in reference to the state law regarding non-attendance because of religious beliefs. **Two unexcused absences** will be allowed for the semester with no credit reduction (first class will not count towards grade).

Special Needs: In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services (CSDS). Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability (physical or mental condition which substantially limits one or more major life activity) are invited to call the Center at (718) 951-5538 or visit us in 138 Roosevelt Hall. If you have already registered with the CSDS and submitted necessary forms, you will receive your course accommodation letter to provide to your professor and these specific accommodations can be discussed when appropriate.

Academic Honesty and Integrity: Your academic honesty is assumed, which means that I expect all of your submitted work to have come from your brain and your hand. If you've submitted the work of someone else or something else (AI sources), in whole or in part and without proper citation, I will not accept the assignment. **Within academic communities, plagiarism represents a serious breach of trust and can carry severe consequences, including disciplinary action.** With that in mind, we'll go over the proper ways of summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, and citing your materials so you can avoid pilfering information, even accidentally. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for policy implementation can be found at www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies. All work done in this course must be your own. The use of generative AI (GAI), like Chat GPT, will be permitted for some assignments as indicated on the syllabus, but not for all. Whenever GAI is used, it must be cited appropriately. It may be used for refining your ideas, fine-tuning research questions, or drafting an outline of your topic. However, you are responsible for any work you submit based on an AI query. Such use may not violate intellectual property laws or contain misinformation or unethical content. Failure to use GAI properly and ethically may result in failing the assignment, the course, or being reported for academic dishonesty.

Student Bereavement Policy: Please see [here](#) for BC Student Bereavement Policy.

Trauma Exposure, Self-Care, and Trauma-Informed Pedagogy: Some of the material presented in this course—and some of the ways in which it is presented—may be upsetting or temporarily overwhelming at times. It is well-documented that indirect exposure to trauma narratives may put people at risk for developing trauma reactions, particularly those who have a personal trauma history or limited clinical experience. Self-awareness and good self-care go a long way in recognizing and minimizing distress and bouncing back from it. Be sure to do periodic self-checks on how the material in the course—and the ways in which the material is delivered and discussed—are affecting you.

Anti-Racist Pedagogy: I believe that Black Lives Matter and I teach from this perspective. However, as a white middle-class woman I am in a position of privilege and power. If you have any questions or issues with class material or my presentation of that material, please do not hesitate to bring them to my attention. I welcome your input. I hope that we can all be open to frank and honest discussions of racism and privilege.

Immigration status: As an educator, I support the rights of undocumented students to an education. If you have any concerns in that regard, feel free to discuss them with me, and I will respect your wishes concerning confidentiality. For resources and support, please check-out Brooklyn College's Immigrant Student Support Office, website: Immigrant Student Success Office email: isso@brooklyn.cuny.edu Instagram: @issobc or visit: <https://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/DACA>.

Sexual And Gender-Based Harassment, Discrimination, and Title IX Brooklyn College is committed to fostering a safe, equitable, and productive learning environment. Students experiencing any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment, on or off campus, can find information about the reporting process, their rights, specific details about confidentiality, and reporting obligations of Brooklyn College employees at the Office of Diversity and Equity. Gender-based harassment is unwelcome conduct of a nonsexual nature based on an individual's actual or perceived gender, including conduct based on gender identity, gender expression, and/or nonconformity with gender stereotypes. Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature—such as unwelcome advances and requests for sexual favors. Bullying, intimidation, and harassment based on actual or perceived sexuality is discriminatory. Brooklyn College encourages individuals who have experienced sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, or sexual violence to report the incident(s) to campus authorities, even if they have reported it to outside law enforcement and regardless of whether the incident(s) occurred on campus. Students may seek resolution through the Student Affairs office, Dean of Students, the Diversity and Equity Office, the Title IX Coordinator, or Public Safety. Confidential resources on campus include the Office of Personal Counseling, The Women's

Center, and the Health Clinic. Appropriate action can include formal disciplinary action, including termination of employment, and suspension or expulsion of students

WK	Dates	Theme	Before Class	In Class
Unit 1-Introduction to Archaeology and The History of Archaeological Thought				
1	8/29	Introductions and Overview	<p>Required Readings: NONE</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is anthropology? • How does archaeology fit into anthropology? <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Syllabus • Read: Nelson, Peter and Sara Gonzalez 2023. What do Archaeologists do? Break into Groups. • Introduce yourselves • Discuss Article
2	9/3 and 9/5	<p>What is Archaeology?</p> <p>Beginnings of the Discipline</p>	<p>Required Readings: Chapter 1-3 <i>Digging into Archaeology</i></p> <p>Watch: Solving Mysteries with Archaeologists! (4.36 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is archaeology? • What do archaeologists do? • In what context did anthropology begin? • What are of the early and critical developments in archaeology? • Who were some of the key players in the beginning of archaeology as a discipline <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection • What do archaeologists study activity
Unit 2-Archaeological Methods				
3	9/10 and 9/12	Archaeology Basics	<p>Required Readings: Chapters 4-8 <i>Digging into Archaeology</i></p> <p>Watch: How Do Archaeologists Decide Where to Dig? (4.22 minutes)</p> <p>Typology in Archaeology (3.15 minutes)</p> <p>Principles of Stratigraphy (4.13 minutes)</p> <p>Dating in Archaeology (10.01 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the scientific method? • What are the four stages of research design? • What is the difference between a survey and an excavation? • How do we decide where to dig? • What is a typology and why are they so important to archaeology? • How do relative and absolute dating techniques differ? • What is the Law of Superposition? <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection • Cookie Excavation <p style="text-align: center;">Quiz-Unit 1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Midwood Movie Available to Watch on Campus</p>
4	9/17	Excavating Brooklyn-Colonial	<p>Required Readings: Flatbush African Burial Ground Website</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection

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4	9/19	African Burial Grounds and Historical Film Studios	Zierden Landscape and Social Relations (20 pages). Online in library.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can we see slavery in the archaeological record? If so, How? • What is the difference between slavery in urban versus rural contexts? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Manhattan African Burial Ground Video/Website in class • Start Midwood Movie-40 minutes
		Object Biography Workshop	<p>Required Readings: Martin, Ann Smart 2001 <i>Magical, Mythical, Practical, and the Sublime</i> (19 pages)</p> <p>Bring Ann Smart-Martin’s worksheet to class</p> <p>Develop Research Question about your object</p> <p>Bring laptop, tablet, or smart phone for online research</p> <p>Object Biography Prep Choose an object from the NYC Repository’s Website: https://archaeology.cityofnewyork.us/</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the NYC Archaeology Repository website • The object for your Object Biography 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Object selected for biography and formulate research questions/ideas • Start Midwood Movie
5	9/24	Midwood Movie	<p>Recommended Reading: Huhtamo, Erkki and Parikka, Jussi. “Introduction: An Archeology of Media Archeology.” <i>Media Archeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications</i>, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011. 1 - 21. (on reserve at the library)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Media Archeology? • How can it help us understand the past? 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection • Finish Film-50 minutes • Break into Groups • Discuss movie • Compose 1-2 questions per group to ask the panel on Thursday
5	9/26	Midwood Film and Panel Event-Tanger Auditorium Library 11-12:30 pm			
6	10/1 and 10/3 (No Class)	CRM, Tourism, and Heritage Management	<p>Required Readings: Renfrew, Colin and Paul Bahn, Chapter 14 in <i>Methods in Archaeology</i></p> <p>Watch: Anthropology: Cultural Resource Management (4.33 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who owns the past? • Can we decolonize the practice of archaeology? If so, how? • Why are historic sites targeted in times of conflict? • How can sites be protected from acts of violence or climate change? 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection • <i>Destruction of Memory clips</i>

WK	Dates	Theme	Before Class	In Class	
7	10/8 and 10/10	<p>Mock Excavation and Lab Methods</p> <p>Meet at Urban Sustainability Garden (Tuesday)</p> <p>Meet at Prof. Britt's Laboratory New Ingersoll Room 538 (Thursday)</p>	<p>For Tuesday's Mock Excavation</p> <p>Watch: How to lay out a 1 x 1 M Unit (2:55 minutes)</p> <p>How to take measurements (2:38)</p> <p>For Thursday's Lab Methods:</p> <p>Introduction to Artifact Biography</p> <p>Explore More: Diagnostic Artifacts in Maryland webpage.</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you layout a unit? • How do you take field notes? • What information can soil tell you? • How do you process artifacts? • What information can be gathered from objects? 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lay out a 1 x 1 m unit • Learn to excavate in natural soil levels • Learn to take field notes and complete field forms • Mapping • Introduction to Repository's website
Unit-3 Thinking from Things-Part 1					
8	10/15	CONVERSION DAY-MONDAY SCHEDULE			
8	10/17	<p>Technology and Trade</p> <p>(Object Biography Topics in to Mariana)</p>	<p>Watch: Stone Tool Technology of Our Human Ancestors (5.41 minutes)</p> <p>Trade and Exchange: From Jacksonville to Cahokia (36.55 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some types of material used by ancient people? • How do we source material? • What can source material tell us about trade and exchange? • How are tools manufactured? • What is the difference between function and use? • What is Characterization? • What is Distribution? 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection • Tool Activity <p style="text-align: right;">Quiz Unit 2</p>
9	10/22 and 10/24	<p>Research Methods</p> <p>Meet in the Library (Tuesday)</p> <p>For GPR Meet at Bedford and Church (Thursday)</p>	<p>Required Readings</p> <p>N/A but bring you Object Biography thesis questions to Tuesday's class</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I formulate a research Question? • How do I do research at the library on a particular topic? • How to I compose a Reference Cited Section? • What's the difference between a References Cited section and a Bibliography? • What is plagiarism? • How is using AI plagiarism? 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection • (Tuesday) Meet at Library • Ground Penetrating Radar GPR (Thursday Meet at FABG)

WK	Dates	Theme	Before Class	In Class	
9	10/24	GPR EVENT AT FABG-CHURCH AND BEDFORD			
Unit 4 Thinking from Things-Part 2					
10	10/29 and 10/31	Subsistence	<p>Required Readings: Chapter 10 in <i>Digging into Archaeology</i></p> <p>Archaeobotany Excavations at Durham University (2.48 minutes)</p> <p>Archaeology 1010: Zooarchaeology- Reading Bones (17.04 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information can we gather from studying subsistence patterns of the past? • Where and how do we get this data? • What can this data tell us? • What is zooarchaeology? • How do we “read” bones and teeth? • What is the difference between MEALS and DIET? 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection • Tooth Wear Lab <p style="text-align: right;">Quiz 3 on Unit 3</p>
11	11/5- Election Day and 11/7	Social Archaeology Identity/ Identities	<p>Required Readings: Chapter 11 in <i>Digging into Archaeology</i></p> <p>Diaz-Andreu, “Introduction” (9 pages)</p> <p>Pearson and Mullins <i>Domesticating Barbie</i> (35 pages-with citations). Online in library.</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is social archaeology? • How do we analyze societies? • What is ethnoarchaeology? • How do we study identity through objects? 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection • Barbie Lab
12	11/12 and 11/14	Cognition Environmental Archaeology-	<p>Required Readings: Renfrew, Colin and Paul Bahn, Chapter 10 in <i>Methods in Archaeology</i> (Cognition)</p> <p>Reitz, Elizabeth J. and Myra Shackly 2012 “Chapter 1 Introduction to Environmental Archaeology” (Environmental Archaeology). on OER site and online in library.</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are symbols are how do they relate to cognitive archaeology? • What are some of the ways people of the past measured their world? • What is environmental archaeology? 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection • Symbol Activity • Climate Change Map Activity
Unit 5-Communities, Heritage, and Heritage Management					
13	11/19 and 11/21	Collecting, Repatriation and Reparations Bio Archaeology	<p>Required Reading: Atalay, Sonya. 2017. NAGPRA Comic 1.</p> <p>Chapters 12 and 16 in <i>Digging into Archaeology</i> (Bio-archaeology and Ethics)</p> <p>Listen: AnthroBiology Podcast: History of Race/The State of Race in Biological Anthropology, February 2020.</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do objects shape our understanding of history and culture? • What are some ethical considerations archaeologists should think about when working with objects from any culture? • What is bioarchaeology? 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection • Read Nayari, Farah (2023) A ‘Digital Heist’ Recaptures the Rosetta Stone • Digital Repatriation Activity <p style="text-align: right;">Quiz 4 on Unit 4</p>

WK	Dates	Theme	Before Class	In Class	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the difference between sex and gender? • What are the ethical considerations when working with human remains? • How can policy support/not support ethical interactions? 	
14	11/26	Community-Based Participatory Research	<p>Required Readings: Atalay, Sonya Chapters from <i>Community-Based Archaeology: Research with, by, and for Indigenous and Local Communities</i>. Online in library.</p> <p>Britt, Kelly M. 2019 "Collaborating on the Federal Level: Moving beyond Mandated Consultation in the Section 106 Process"</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is community-based research? • What makes it different than other forms of research? • How do we Indigenize archaeology? • How is this different from decolonizing it? 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection • Building a Community Activity
14	11/28	THANKSGIVING BREAK			
15	12/3 and 12/5	Indigenous Archaeology	<p>Required Readings: Laluk, Nicholas C. 2020 "Changing how archaeology is done in Native American contexts: An Ndee (Apache) case study"</p> <p>Optional: Contemporary Native Issues: Indigenizing Archaeological Thought and Practice</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we Indigenize archaeology? • How is this different from decolonizing it? 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection • Map comparison activity <p style="text-align: right;">Quiz 5 on Unit 5</p>
16	12/10 and 12/12	Pseudo-Archaeology Archaeology Futures	<p>Required Readings: Feder, Kenneth L.(2019) Ch 9: Prehistoric E.T. from Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries: Science and Pseudoscience in Archaeology (Pseudoarchaeology)</p> <p>Questions Worth Asking Symposium 2023 "Advocating for Archaeology's New Purpose"</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will the archaeology of the future look like? • How do shows like Ancient Apocalypse contribute to systematic racism? And/or other forms of social inequities? • What is pseudoarchaeology and why is it so problematic? • How will social media, fake news and social aspects affect what and how archaeology is done? 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Reflection • Pseudo-archaeology Activity

* Note syllabus subject to change.

Tentative Final Date: Tuesday December 17, 2024 Object Biography Due in lieu of final exam

Resources and Organizations:

[Archpodnet](#)

[Society of American Archaeology](#)

[Society of Black Archaeologists](#)

[Archaeological Institute of America](#)

[Society of Historical Archaeology](#)