

**Anthropology 4HF3
Archaeology of Hunter-Fisher-Gatherers**

Office: Chester New Hall Rm. 508
Office hours: Monday 3:00-4:00, or by appointment

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Classes: Monday 11:30-2:20, Room KTH 105

This course examines the goals and evidence for the archaeology of hunter-fisher-gatherer cultures from the late Pleistocene through the Holocene. Readings, discussion and assignments will focus on: 1) the insights we think we might, should or could learn from the study of past cultures that made their living from environmentally available resources, 2) tensions between apparent linear evolutionary trends and the unique histories of hunter-gatherers, and 3) major historical trends and their explanation.

Required text:

Hiscock, Peter

2008 *Archaeology of Ancient Australia*. London: Routledge.

Grading:

Reading questions and comments	- 15%
Mid-term paper	- 25%
Research updates	- 15%
Final paper	- 45%

Reading questions and comments: Comments or questions based on each week's readings are due in the dropbox on Avenue to Learn by 11:30 pm on the Friday before the date for which the reading is assigned. For weeks with multiple readings and/or multiple chapters, a comment or question is required for each chapter or article. Comments or questions must be in full sentence form. Comments should be explained and questions should provide context explaining why the question is meaningful or potentially important. Each reading is worth a single point. Late comments or questions will be accepted for up to one week, but will only be awarded half value.

Mid-term paper: This will be a short (4-8 page), well-argued opinion piece to explain how and why knowledge gained from the archaeological study of past hunter-fisher-gatherer cultures is either relevant to perspectives on contemporary issues (e.g. gender relations, diet, spirituality, inequality, environmental sustainability, the role of technology, propensities for conflict and peace), or, alternatively, is intrinsically interesting in revealing the pattern and diversity of human culture history. Extensive research on particular case studies will not be necessary, but arguments should be supported with reference to specific or more general works from hunter-fisher-gatherer archaeology.

Research updates: There will be a series of equally weighted tasks that will be the building blocks for the term-paper research project. The results must be submitted in writing and will provide the basis for in-class presentation and discussion. Topics and dates will be determined in class.

Final paper: This will be the culmination of a term-long research project. The paper will be an extended outline, analysis, comparison and explanation of different aspects of the archaeology of a specific hunter-fisher-gatherer culture in a particular time and place in world history. Regional and topical selection will be specific for each student. The research will take place over the course of the entire term. Regional topic selection will take place in class.

Penalties will apply for all late and missed assignments unless an MSAF is filed.

SCHEDULED TOPICS AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Sept. 10 - Introduction: What do we expect to learn from hunter-gatherer archaeology?

Sept. 17 - Origins: Do beginnings matter? READING: Gamble and Gittins 2004.

Sept. 24 - Origins and environments. READING: Hiscock 2008: Ch. 1-4.

Oct. 1 - Evolution and histories. READING: Hiscock 2008: Ch. 5-7.

Oct. 8 - Mid-term recess.

Oct. 15 - Technology and economies. READING: Hiscock 2008: Ch. 8-11; Nelson 1991.

Oct. 22 - Settlement patterns. READING: Hiscock 2008: Ch. 12-13; Kelly 1996.

Oct. 29 - Landscape. READING: Oetelaar 2017.

Nov. 5 - Social complexity. READING: Arnold et al. 2016.

Nov. 12 - Economic intensification. READING: Morgan 2015.

Nov. 19 - Spirituality and worldview. READING: Fuglestedt 2011, McCall 2007.

Nov. 26 - Regional interaction. READING: Jones and Allen 2014, Sassaman 2011.

Dec. 3 - Directions in hunter-fisher-gatherer archaeology. READING: Cannon 2014.

READINGS

Arnold, Jeanne E., Scott Sunell, Benjamin T. Nigra, Katelyn J. Bishop, Terrah Jones, and Jacob Bongers
2016 Entrenched Disbelief: Complex Hunter-Gatherers and the Case for Inclusive Cultural
Evolutionary Thinking. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 23:448–499. ONLINE

Cannon, Aubrey
2014 Historical and Humanist Perspectives. In *Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology and
Anthropology of Hunter Gatherers*, edited by Vicki Cummings, Peter Jordan and Marek Zvelebil,
pp. 92-103. Oxford: Oxford University Press. POSTED

Fuglestedt, Ingrid
2011 Humans, Material Culture and Landscape: Outline to an Understanding of Developments in
Worldviews on the Scandinavian Peninsula, ca. 10,000-4500 BP. In *Structured Worlds: The
Archaeology of Hunter-gatherer Thought and Action*, edited by Aubrey Cannon, pp. 32-53.
London: Equinox. POSTED

Gamble, Clive and Erica Gittins
2004 Social Archaeology and Origins Research: A Paleolithic Perspective. In *A Companion to Social
Archaeology*, edited by Lynn Meskell and Robert W. Preucel, pp. 96-118. Oxford: Blackwell.
POSTED

- Hiscock, Peter
2008 *Archaeology of Ancient Australia*. London: Routledge.
- Kelly, Robert L.
1992 Mobility/Sedentism: Concepts, Archaeological Measures, and Effects. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 21:43-66. ONLINE
- Jones, Terry L. and Mark W. Allen
2014 The Prehistory of Violence and Warfare among Hunter-Gatherers. In *Violence and Warfare among Hunter-Gatherers*, edited by Mark W. Allen and Terry L. Jones, pp 353-371. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press. E-Book
- McCall, Grant S.
2007 Add Shamans and Stir? A Critical Review of the Shamanism Model of Forager Rock Art Production. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 26:224–233. ONLINE
- Morgan, Christopher
2015 Is it Intensification Yet? Current Archaeological Perspectives on the Evolution of Hunter-Gatherer Economies. *Journal of Archaeological Research* 23:163–213. ONLINE
- Nelson, Margaret C.
1991 The Study of Technological Organization. In *Archaeological Method and Theory*, vol. 3, edited by Michael B. Schiffer, pp. 57-100. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. POSTED
- Oetelaar, Gerald A.
2016 Places on the Blackfoot Homeland: Markers of Cosmology, Social Relationships and History. In *Marking the Land: Hunter-Gatherer Creation of Meaning in their Environment*, edited by William A. Lovis and Robert Whallon, pp. 45-66. London: Routledge. POSTED
- Sassaman, Kenneth E.
History and Alterity in the Eastern Archaic. In *Hunter-Gatherer Archaeology as Historical Process*, edited by Kenneth E. Sassaman and Donald H. Holly, pp. 187-208. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. POSTED

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”. Please note these regulations have changed beginning Spring/Summer 2015

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student’s religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code. Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Privacy Protection

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the

University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class;
2. Return of materials to students during office hours;
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

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