

BIOARCHAEOLOGY

WINTER 2021

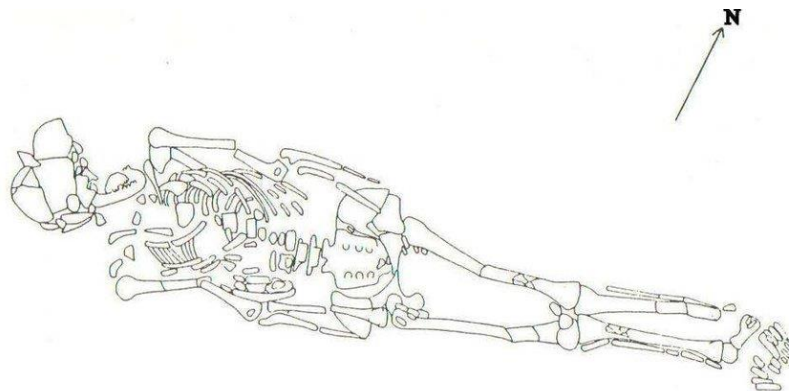


Image Source: Wallin (2010:44). Neolithic monuments on Gotland: Material expressions of the domestication process, vol 5, Gotland University Press, pp 39-61.

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Course Description

This seminar will explore methodological and theoretical issues related to the study of human skeletal remains in archaeological contexts, generally known as the sub-field of bioarchaeology. We will examine how bioarchaeologists investigate human skeletal remains and relate these analyses to larger social, political, and economic processes. Topics will **vary depending on instructor and student interest** but can cover a range of topics including the bioarchaeology of childhood, gender, violence, and colonialism (among others), as well as topics relating to mortuary analysis and the archaeology of death. The seminars may also focus on methodology (e.g., biochemical methods) and emerging theoretical perspectives.

We will work together in the first seminar to set the direction of the course and to choose the topics and ideas to be considered. This schedule may be modified through group consensus as our interests broaden through exposure to the literature and to new ideas.

Due to the delayed start of classes provided by the University, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on Avenue to Learn will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should:

- Be able to articulate how bioarchaeological research relates to other sub-disciplines in Anthropology and across disciplines to areas like Classics and History. What does it mean to be a bioarchaeologist, and how does bioarchaeology connect to other theoretical and disciplinary perspectives?
- Be familiar with current literature in bioarchaeology and the central theoretical perspectives used in bioarchaeological research.
- Develop skills in the critical analysis of current research in the field of bioarchaeology.
- Improve research and writing skills through the regular submission of written work.

Required Materials and Texts

Cheverko CM, Prince-Buitenhuis JR, and Hubbe M. 2021. Theoretical Approaches in Bioarchaeology. New York: Routledge.

Additional weekly assigned readings.

Recommended Texts (not required)

Agarwal SC and Wesp JK. 2017. Exploring Sex and Gender in Bioarchaeology Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Agarwal SC and Glencross B. 2011. Social Bioarchaeology. Walden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Beauchesne P, and Agarwal SC. 2018. Children and Childhood in Bioarchaeology. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida.

Buikstra J. 2019. Bioarchaeologists Speak Out: Deep Time Perspectives on Contemporary Issues. New York: Springer.

Buikstra J and Beck L. 2006. Bioarchaeology: The Contextual Analysis of Human Remains. London: Academic Press.

Klaus HD, Harvey AR, and Cohen MN. 2017. Bones of Complexity: Bioarchaeological Case Studies of Social Organization and Skeletal Biology. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida.

Knüsel C, and Smith M. 2019. The Routledge Handbook of the Bioarchaeology of Conflict. New York: Routledge.

Larsen CS. 2015. Bioarchaeology: Interpreting Behavior from the Human Skeleton. 2nd Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lewis ME. 2006. Bioarchaeology of Children: Perspectives from Biological and Forensic Anthropology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mant M, and Jaagumägi Holland A. 2019. The Bioarchaeology of Marginalized People. New York: Academic Press.

Robbins Schug G. 2020. The Routledge Handbook of the Bioarchaeology of Climate and Environmental Change. New York: Routledge.

Sofaer JR. 2006. The Body as Material Culture: A Theoretical Osteoarchaeology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Class Format

We will meet each week in a synchronous seminar format with class discussions using Zoom. I will send out the Zoom invitation details prior to the first seminar, and I will also post the link on A2L. These seminars will not be recorded, unless specifically requested. We will not necessarily use the entire three hours for our weekly discussions, and we will take regular breaks, so we will see how things go! My preference is that we all have our cameras on, so we can see each other when we are speaking. Please come to each session having read the required readings, posted at least two discussion questions on A2L, and uploaded a copy of your weekly Opinion Piece on A2L. Your questions and opinion pieces will form the basis of our discussions.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Opinion Pieces and Discussion Questions – 35%, due weekly
2. Seminar Participation and Topic Facilitation – 25%, ongoing
3. Independent Project Proposal – 10%, due March 1st
4. Independent Project – 30%, due at the end of term

Course Evaluation – Details

Opinion Pieces and Discussion Questions (35%), due weekly

Each week you will be provided with a list of required readings for the next seminar. Your opinion piece and discussion questions will be based on these required readings.

Opinion Pieces -

The opinion pieces will be submitted each Monday on A2L **prior to the start of each seminar** (i.e., due by 12:30pm each Monday). These opinion pieces should identify major themes, important viewpoints, underlying assumptions, potential issues, and raise questions about the readings that facilitate discussion in the seminar. The papers should be 0.5 to 1 page **MAXIMUM** (typed, 12 pt., single spaced) synthetic **critiques** of the readings. Note: these are **not summaries** of what you have read, but rather are thoughtful analyses of what you have read. What did you really like (or dislike) about the readings? What resonated (or stuck) with you? What was missing? Full credit will only be given if the written summary refers to all assigned readings and includes some independent critique or synthesis. References are only required if you discuss new material (i.e., not the required readings).

Discussion Questions -

The night before each seminar (i.e., by midnight on Sunday), each participant is required to post two issues or questions on the A2L discussion board that have arisen from your assigned readings for that week. These questions/ideas will help to frame our discussion for the next day.

Seminar Participation and Topic Coordination (25%), ongoing

This is a small discussion-based seminar, so participation is **important**. You are expected to attend all Zoom sessions, ask questions, make comments, bring your perspective to discussions, and raise issues from your own ongoing research. The degree to which each participant is enriched by this class relates directly to the degree to which all of us share information and ideas.

After we have established a list of potential topics for each week, each student will work with me to select readings for **two** of those weeks. I will be responsible for selecting one or two seminal publications that have laid the theoretical and/or methodological foundations for a particular area of research, and you will select relevant recent readings on the topic.

Independent Project Proposal (10%), due March 1st

This is a brief (1000-1500 words; 2-3 pages) outline of your proposed project. If it is a research project, the proposal will include a preliminary list of references (these do not count towards the page total). If your project is a grant proposal, this will be a preliminary draft of sections included in the grant.

Independent Project (30%), due April 12th

The focus of this project is open for negotiation. I would like each student to do something that is useful and relevant to their academic goals and interests. That may be writing a standard ~20 page research paper to be used as a basis for a thesis proposal or comprehensive paper, or it could be developing a series of lectures and course evaluations to an undergraduate bioarchaeology course. The project can be writing a complete grant proposal (e.g., a Wenner Gren proposal), or you can develop a podium presentation for an upcoming conference (e.g., CAPA 2021 in Hamilton) that you would present to the group. You could also decide to develop a web page or blog that would provide students with information on all aspects of bioarchaeology (graduate schools, fieldwork opportunities, journals, books, etc...).

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (Jan 11th)

Getting to know each other

Readings: none

Notes: **For our first seminar, please prepare an “intellectual autobiography” (~0.5-1 page, single-spaced).** I would like you to write about who you are (personally and professionally), your background, what experiences have shaped your academic interests, and why you are taking this course in bioarchaeology. Please also provide **at least two potential topics or questions** (more than two are fine) that you are interested in pursuing in this course. We will discuss these during the first seminar, and I will use them to help develop topics for the course. We will also discuss what worked well (and what didn't work) in your online seminar courses last term.

Notes: Intellectual autobiography (including topics of interest) uploaded to A2L **by 6:00pm on Monday, Jan 11th.**

Week 2 (Jan 18th)

What is Bioarchaeology?

Required Readings:

- 1) Cheverko et al. 2020. Chapter 1 – Theory in Bioarchaeology. In, Ceverko CM, Prince-Buitenhuys JR, and Hubbe M, editors. Theoretical Approaches in Bioarchaeology. New York: Routledge, pp. 1-14.
- 2) Larsen CS. 2017. Bioarchaeology in perspective: From classifications of the dead to conditions of the living. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 165: 865-878.
- 3) Cybulski JS, Katzenberg MA. 2014 The origins of “bioarchaeology” in Canada. In, O'Donnabhain B, Lozada MC, editors. *Archaeological Human Remains*. Springer Briefs in Archaeology. New York: Springer. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-06370-6_7 (available as an e-book through McMaster Library).

Notes: Discussion questions posted on A2L discussion board by Sunday, midnight. Opinion piece #1 uploaded to A2L by 1:00pm Monday.

Week 3 (Jan 25th)

Ethics in Bioarchaeology

Required Readings:

- 1) DeWitte SN. 2015. Bioarchaeology and the ethics of research using human skeletal remains. *History Compass* 13(1): 10-19.
- 2) Lambert PM, Walker PL. 2019. Bioarchaeological ethics: Perspectives on the use and value of human remains in scientific research. In: Katzenberg MA and Grauer AL, editors. *Biological Anthropology of the Human Skeleton*. 3rd edition. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, pp. 3-42.

- 3) Bourgeois RL. 2020. [Reorienting bioarchaeology for an era of Reconciliation](https://doi.org/10.29173/pathways6). Pathways 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.29173/pathways6>

Notes: Discussion questions posted on A2L discussion board by Sunday, midnight.
Opinion piece #2 uploaded to A2L by 1:00pm Monday.

Week 4 (Feb 1st)

Feb 1st – topic TBD

Readings: TBD

Notes: Discussion questions posted on A2L discussion board by Sunday, midnight.
Opinion piece #3 uploaded to A2L by 1:00pm Monday.

Week 5 (Feb 8th)

Feb 8th – topic TBD

Readings: TBD

Notes: Discussion questions posted on A2L discussion board by Sunday, midnight.
Opinion piece #4 uploaded to A2L by 1:00pm Monday.

Week 6 (Feb 15th) – no seminar, mid-term break

Week 7 (Feb 22nd)

Feb 22nd – topic TBD

Readings: TBD

Notes: Discussion questions posted on A2L discussion board by Sunday, midnight.
Opinion piece #5 uploaded to A2L by 1:00pm Monday.

Week 8 (Mar 1st)

Mar 1st – topic TBD

Readings: TBD

Notes: Independent Project proposal due by 6:00pm on March 1st; upload to A2L.
Discussion questions posted on A2L discussion board by Sunday, midnight.

***No Opinion piece due this week.**

Week 9 (Mar 8th)

Mar 8th – topic TBD

Readings: TBD

Notes: Discussion questions posted on A2L discussion board by Sunday, midnight.
Opinion piece #6 uploaded to A2L by 1:00pm Monday.

Week 10 (Mar 15th)

Mar 15th – topic TBD

Readings: TBD

Notes: Discussion questions posted on A2L discussion board by Sunday, midnight.
Opinion piece #7 uploaded to A2L by 1:00pm Monday.

Week 11 (Mar 22nd)

Mar 22nd – topic TBD

Readings: TBD

Notes: Discussion questions posted on A2L discussion board by Sunday, midnight.
Opinion piece #8 uploaded to A2L by 1:00pm Monday.

Week 12 (Mar 29th)

Mar 29th – topic TBD

Readings: TBD

Notes: Discussion questions posted on A2L discussion board by Sunday, midnight.
Opinion piece #9 uploaded to A2L by 1:00pm Monday.

Week 13 (Apr 5th)

Apr 5th – topic TBD

Readings: TBD

Notes: Discussion questions posted on A2L discussion board by Sunday, midnight.
Opinion piece #10 uploaded to A2L by 1:00pm Monday.

Week 14 (Apr 12th)

Apr 12th – topic TBD

Readings: TBD

Notes: Discussion questions posted on A2L discussion board by Sunday, midnight.
***No Opinion piece due this week.**

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

All assignments (discussion questions, opinion pieces, proposal, and final project) should be submitted through A2L.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Late submissions will be deducted 10% per day, including weekends.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Please contact me if you have missed a seminar or a deadline. Sometimes life just happens, and we can always adjust due dates.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please to go www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

University Policies

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.

ADVISORY STATEMENTS

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

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 behaviour 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. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster’s use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

ONLINE PROCTORING

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

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”.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar’s Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.