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ANTY 513.01: Seminar in Bioarchaeology and Skeletal Biology

Corey Ragsdale

University of Montana, Missoula

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Ragsdale, Corey, "ANTY 513.01: Seminar in Bioarchaeology and Skeletal Biology" (2016). *Syllabi*. 4657.
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Anthropology 513

Bioarchaeology Seminar



Instructor: Dr. Corey Ragsdale
Office: Social Science 217
Email: corey.ragsdale@mso.umt.edu
Office hours: TR 2:00 to 3:30

Course Description

Bioarchaeology allows us to ‘people’ the past. To do this, bioarchaeologists follow two general rules of thumb. First, they contextualize human remains in physical space, cultural milieu, and pre-historic time. That is, skeletonized and mummified bodies are never examined without also considering their associated archaeological materials. Second, bioarchaeologists regard ancient bodies as bio-cultural phenomena. Human biology is impacted directly by culture, and vice versa. With these two ideas in hand, we will explore bioarchaeology’s history, development, major topical concerns, and debates. We will also engage critically with categories and assumptions about race, sex/gender, age, ethnicity, disease and disability, violence, and body parts. To conclude the semester, we will reflect upon bioarchaeology’s relevance in contemporary politics.

Readings

The required text can be purchased at the bookstore. You can access all other assigned and supplemental readings online. This course is reading intensive, so be prepared to spend several hours a week outside of class preparing for discussion.

- Larsen, Clark. 2014. *Bioarchaeology: Interpreting Behavior from the Human Skeleton*, 2nd Edition. Cambridge University Press
- Agarwal, Sabrina & Bonnie Glencross. 2011. *Social Bioarchaeology*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell
- All other readings are available online

Course Requirements and Grading

Readings Summaries (5)	30%
Discussion Leader	20%
Research Project/Presentation	50%

Readings Summaries:

Summaries of the readings are assigned throughout the course to ensure students are keeping up with the reading. These summaries will involve a critique of a few papers from the weeks prior, and should demonstrate an understanding of the topic and evidence of critical thinking. These will be discussed further in class.

Discussion Leaders:

You will lead discussion once between Weeks 3 and 12. As discussion leader, you should summarize the readings' key points and facilitate class discussion. You can provide your classmates with handouts or show powerpoint slides. Your grade will reflect the quality and clarity of your questions. To further engender discussion, you can also draw on videos, news articles, graphs, tables, supplemental readings, or additional scholarly sources.

Research Project:

Select a topic that piques your interest. Your research proposal is an opportunity to explore this further. The format of this paper will be similar to that of a grant proposal (NSF or NIH format). Details of the format for this paper will be discussed further in class. Additionally, you will be required to do an oral presentation of your research proposal. This presentation accounts for 10% of your total course grade (1/5 of your final paper). Details regarding this presentation will be discussed in class.

Course Reading Schedule

Week 1: Paradigms in Bioarchaeology (1/26-1/28)

- Agarwal and Glencross: Chapters 1-5 (skip Chapter 3)
- Washburn, S.L. 1951. The New Physical Anthropology. *Trans of the NY Academy of Sciences* 13(7): 298-304.
- Binford, Lewis R. 1962. Archaeology as Anthropology. *American Antiquity* 28(2): 217-25.

Week 2: Bioarchaeology of Populations and Individuals (2/2-2/4)

- Bocquet-Appel, J.-P., and C. Masset. 1982. Farewell to Paleodemography. *Journal of Human Evolution* 11: 321-333.
- Stojanowski, C. 2005. The Bioarchaeology of Identity in Spanish Colonial Florida: Social and Evolutionary Transformation before, during, and after Demographic Collapse. *American Anthropologist* 107(3): 417-31.
- Zvelebil M, and Weber AW. 2013. Human bioarchaeology: Group identity and individual life histories – Introduction. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 32: 275-279.
- Saul, Frank P. and Julie M. Saul. 1989. "Osteobiography: A Maya Example" in *Reconstruction of Life from the Skeleton*. Edited by M. Iscan & K.A.R. Kennedy, pp. 287-302. New York: Alan R. Liss, Inc.
- Buikstra, J., T. Price, J. Burton, and L. Wright. 2004. "Tombs from Copan's Acropolis: A Life History Approach" in *Understanding Early Classic Copan*. Ed by E. Bell, et al., pp. 191-212. Philadelphia: UPMAA Pr.

Week 3: Politicization (2/9-2/11)

- Larsen: Chapter 11
- Agarwal and Glencross: Chapter 3

- Ousley, S.D., W.T. Billeck, and R.E. Hollinger. 2005. Federal Repatriation Legislation and the Role of Physical Anthropology in Repatriation. *AJPA* 128(Suppl 41):2-32
- Kakaliouras, Ann. 2008. Leaving Few Bones Unturned: Recent Work on Repatriation by Osteologists. *American Anthropologist* 110(1):44-52

Week 4: Sex and Gender (2/16-2/18)

- Agarwal and Glencross: Chapter 6
- Brown, K.A. 1998. Gender and Sex—What Can Ancient DNA Tell Us? *Ancient Biomolecules* 2: 3-15.
- **Readings summary 1**

Topic discussant:

- Sofaer Derevenski, Joanna. 2000. Sex Differences in Activity-Related Osseous Change in the Spine and the Gendered Division of Labor at Ensay and Wharram Percy, UK. *Am. Journal of Physical Anthropology* 111:333-54.
- Agarwal SC. 2012. The Past of Sex, Gender, and Health: Bioarchaeology of the Aging Skeleton. *American Anthropologist* 114: 322-335.
- Geller, Pamela. 2009. Bodyscapes, Biology, and Heteronormativity. *American Anthropologist* 111(4): 504-16 .

Week 5: Age (2/23-2/25)

- Larsen: Chapter 10
- Agarwal and Glencross: Chapters 10-13

Topic discussant:

- Agarwal, Sabrina. 2008. “Light & Broken Bones: Examining and Interpreting Bone Loss and Osteoporosis in Past Populations” in *Biological Anthropology of the Human Skeleton* (2nd ed). Ed. by M. Katzenberg and S. Saunders, pp. 387-412. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Halcrow SE and Tayles N. 2008. The Bioarchaeological Investigation of Childhood and Social Age: Problems and Prospects. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 15: 190-215.
- Gowland, Rebecca. 2006. “Ageing the Past: Examining Age Identity from Funerary Evidence” in *Social Archaeology of Funerary Remains*. Ed. by R. Gowland & C. Knüsel, pp. 143-54. Oxford: Oxbow Books.
- **Readings summary 2**

Week 6: Population Affinity (3/1-3/3)

- Larsen: Chapter 9
- American Association of Physical Anthropologists. 1996. “AAPA statement on biological aspects of race.” *AJPA* 101(4): 569-70

Topic discussant:

- La Roche, Cheryl J. and Michael L. Blakey. 1997. Seizing Intellectual Power: The dialogue at the New York African Burial Ground. *Historical Archaeology* 31(3): 83-106.

- Knudson and Stojanowski. 2008. New Directions in Bioarchaeology: Recent Contributions to the Study of Human Social Identities. *Journal of Archaeological Research* 16: 397-432.
- Ousley, S., R. Jantz, and D. Freid. 2009. Understanding Race and Human Variation: Why Forensic Anthropologists are Good at Identifying Race. *AJPA* 139(1): 1-4.

Week 7: Cultural Affiliation and Ethnicity (3/8-3/10)

- Jones, Sian. 1997. "Ethnicity and Material Culture: Towards a Theoretical Basis for the Interpretation of Ethnicity in Archaeology" in *The Archaeology of Ethnicity*, pp. 106-27. New York: Routledge

Topic discussant:

- Torres-Rouff, C. 2002. Cranial Vault Modification and Ethnicity in Middle Horizon San Pedro de Atacama, Chile. *Current Anthropology* 43: 163-71.
- Buzon, M.R. 2006. Biological and Ethnic Identity in New Kingdom Nubia: A Case Study from Tombo. *Current Anthropology* 47: 683-95.
- Arriaza et al. The Bioarchaeological Value of Human Mummies Without Provenience. 2008. *Chungara* 40: 55-65.
- **Readings summary 3**

Week 8: Biological Distance Studies (3/15-3/17)

- Larsen: Chapter 7
- Pietrusewsky M. 2014. Biological Distance. In: Smith C. (Ed.) *Encyclopedia of Global Archaeology*: Springer Reference.

Topic discussant:

- Herrera, B., Hanihara, T, and Godde, K. 2014. Comparability of Multiple Data Types From the Bering Strait Region: Cranial and Dental Metrics and Nonmetrics, mtDNA, and Y-Chromosome DNA. *AJPA* 154: 334-348.
- Scherer AK. 2007. Population Structure of the Classic Period Maya. *AJPA* 132: 367-380.
- Sutter R and Castillo LJ. 2015. Population Structure during the Demise of the Moche (550–850 AD): Comparative Phenetic Analyses of Tooth Trait Data from San José de Moro, Perú. *Current Anthropology* 56: 762-771.

Week 9: Habitual Activity (3/22-3/24)

- Larsen: Chapters 5 and 6
- Agarwal and Glencross: Chapter 8

Topic discussant:

- Hawkey, Diane. 1998. Disability, Compassion and the Skeletal Record: Using Musculoskeletal Stress Markers (MSM) to Construct an Osteobiography from Early New Mexico. *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 8: 326-40.
- Agnew A, Betsinger TK, and Justus HM. 2015. Post-Cranial Traumatic Injury Patterns in Two Medieval Polish Populations: The Effects of Lifestyle Differences. *Plos ONE*.
- Lukacs JR and Pal JN. 2003. Skeletal Variation among Mesolithic People of the Ganga Plains: New Evidence of Habitual Activity and Adaptation to Climate. *Asian Perspectives* 42: 329-351.

Week 10: Health and Disease (3/29-3/31)

- Larsen: Chapters 2 and 3
- Wood, J.W., G.R. Milner, H.C. Harpending, and K.M. Weiss. 1992. The Osteological Paradox: Problems of Inferring Prehistoric Health from Skeletal Samples. *Current Anthropology* 33:343-70.

Discussion Articles: Instructor

- Mays S, Vincent S, Meadows J. 2012. A possible case of treponemal disease from England dating to the 11th-12th century AD. *Int J Osteoarchaeology* 22(3): 366-372.
- Harper KN, Zuckerman MK, Armelagos GJ. 2013. Correspondence: A possible (but not probable?) case of treponemal disease. *Int J Osteoarchaeology* 23(5): 626-627.
- Mays S, Vincent S. 2013. Correspondence: Probable and possible cases of treponematosi s: A response to the comment 'A possible (but not probable?) case of treponemal disease' by Harper, Zuckerman, and Armelagos. *Int J Osteoarchaeology* 23(5): 628-629.
- **Readings summary 4**

Week 11: SPRING BREAK-NO CLASSES (4/5-4/7)

Week 12: Bioarcheology of Violence (4/12-4/14)

- Larsen: Chapter 4
- Martin DL and Herrod RP. 2015. Bioarchaeological Contributions to the Study of Violence. *Yearbook of Physical Anthropology* 156: 116-145.
- Billman, Brian, Patricia M. Lambert, and Banks L. Leonard. 2000. Cannibalism, Warfare, and Drought in the Mesa Verde Region during the 12th Century A.D. *American Antiquity* 65:145-78.
- Jones S, Walsh-Haney H, and Quinn R. 2015. Kana Tamata or Feasts of Men: An Interdisciplinary Approach for Identifying Cannibalism in Prehistoric Fiji. *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 25: 127-145.

Week 13: Body Modification (4/19-4/21)

- Martin DL, Harrod RP, Ventura RP. 2013. The Body as Material Culture. In *Bioarchaeology: An Integrated Approach to Working with Human Remains (Manuals in Archaeological Method, Theory and Technique)*.

Topic discussant:

- Verano, John. 1995. "Where Do They Rest? The Treatment of Human Offerings & Trophies in Ancient Perú" in *Tombs for the Living*. Ed. by T. Dillehay, pp. 189-227. Washington, DC: *Dumbarton Oaks*.
- Lucero, L., and S. Gibbs. 2007. "The Creation & Sacrifice of Witches in Classic Maya Society" in *New Perspectives on Human Sacrifice & Ritual Body Treatments in Ancient Maya Society*. Ed. By V. Tiesler & A. Cucina, pp. 45-73. New York: Springer.
- Lara M, Paz V, Lewis H, Solheim II W. 2015. Bone Modifications in an Early Holocene Cremation Burial from Palawan, Philippines. *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 25: 637-632.
- **Readings summary 5**

Week 14: Biochemistry (4/26-4/28)

- Larsen: Chapter 8
- Agarwal and Glencross: Chapter 15

Topic discussant:

- Sandberg, P.A., Sponheimer, M., Lee-Thorp, J., Van Gervin, D. 2014. Intra-Tooth Stable Isotope Analysis of Dentine: A Step Toward Addressing Selective Mortality in the Reconstruction of Life History in the Archaeological Record. *AJPA* 155: 281-193.
- Ezzo JA, Johnson CM, and Price TD. 1997. Analytical Perspectives on Prehistoric Migration: A Case Study from East-Central Arizona. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 24:447-466.

Week 15: Research Presentations (5/3-5/5)

- **Research Papers Due**