ANTH 595.01: Seminar in Power, Prestige, and Things

John E. Douglas
University of Montana - Missoula

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Description: This seminar engages the social concepts of power, inequality, prestige, and leadership as seen in the archaeological record. Most readings in the seminar consider how objects, both small (artifacts) and large (monuments), create, mediate, and mark power and prestige, and how archaeologists can approach interpretation of power and prestige from the archaeological record. The processes by which different forms of inequality, prestige, and leadership emerge in societies are also considered through a variety of theoretical approaches, including: conflict theories, benefit theories, prestige economy models, heterarchy, network and corporate systems of power, etc.

The examples and study cases considered in the seminar come from around the world and from many different time periods. In the final portion of the course, data and analysis concerning societies in the prehistoric southwestern U.S. and northwestern Mexico during the period from A.D. 900 to 1450 are used as an extended case example.


All other readings are on reserve at the Mansfield Library. Many of these articles are also available through the Library’s electronic journal subscriptions, and can be read on screen or printed. These can be found at http://weblib.lib.umt.edu/ejrn/ejrn.html, either using a campus computer, or, after registration, your home computer.

Course requirements:
A. You are expected to be a participant, joining in the discussion by providing thoughtful questions, opinions, and critique.

B. You will lead the discussion for about four of the assigned readings. This requires:
   1. presenting any needed background or context;
   2. a brief summary of the arguments and approach;
   3. an identification of the school of thought and/or of any untested assumptions the author(s) make(s);
   4. the kinds of evidence the that the author(s) use(s), and the credibility of the evidence for the conclusions that are made;
   5. your perceptions of the strengths, weaknesses, and importance of the paper. You may pose questions and engage the other seminar participants as part of the presentation.

C. You must write three essays, each 1,000 to 1,500 words (about 4-6 pages of standard double-spaced text) plus references. The due dates for these assignments are spaced approximately evenly in the semester, and must be submitted on the required date for full credit (except under extraordinary circumstances and with approval of the instructor). In general, these essays will call on you to engage the readings and discussions in a systematic and cogent manner, and can involve the use of a limited number of sources beyond those discussed in class. More specific
information on each assignment will be given in class approximately two weeks before the assignment is due.

Grades are based on the following formula: Class participation counts for 25%; seminar presentations counts for 30%; and papers counts for 45%. Please note that February 13 is the last day to add or drop a course without penalty, and March 9 is the last day to add, drop, or change grading option with signatures and fees.

**Reading List and Schedule**

**January 29, introduction**

**February 5, neoevolution and its demise**  
Flannery 1972*  
Peebles and Kus 1977*  
Feinman and Neizel 1984

**February 12, shopping for a replacement**  
Yoffee 1993  
Wolf 1990  
Brumfiel 1992  
Paynter 1989*

**February 19, new models**  
Blanton et al. 1996*  
DeMarrais et al. 1996*  
Hayden 1995  
Crumley 1987, 1995

**February 26, critical examples**  
Arnold 1996  
Wiessner 2002*

**March 4, feasts, rituals, and elites (first paper due)**  
Blitz 1993*  
Potter 2000*  
Lucero 2003*  
Spielmann 2002*

**March 11, production and exchange**  
Costin 1998  
Lass 1998  
Muller 1999  
Trubitt 2000*

**March 18, commodities and resistance**  
Miller 1995*  
Henry 1991  
Klein 1991  
Wurst and McGuire 1999*

**March 25, monuments and power**  
Trigger 1990*  
Nelson 1996*  
Leone 1984

**April 1, spring break, no class**

**April 8, regional systems in Northwest Mexico/Southwest US (second paper due)**  
Mills 2002  
Bayman 2001
Whalen and Minnis 2001

April 15, conceptualizing power in the Southwest
  Upham and Plog 1986
  McGuire and Saitta 1996*
  Rautman 1997*
  Mills 2000**

April 22, power and leadership in the Southwest, Part 1
  Wills 2000**
  Graves and Spielmann 2000**
  Potter and Perry 2000**
  Scott 2000**

April 29, power and leadership in the Southwest, Part 2
  Kintigh 2000**
  Elson and Abbott 2000**
  Harry and Bayman 2000**
  Fish and Fish 2000**

May 6, power and leadership in the Southwest, Part 3
  Whalen and Minnis 2000**
  Kohler, Van Pelt, and Yap 2000**
  Feinman 2000**
  Douglas 2000

May 10, Monday, finals week, by 5:00 P.M., third paper due

May 13, Thursday, finals period, 3:20-5:20, discussion and summary
  Hegmon 2003**

*Available through UM electronic journals  **Chapter in required text

Bibliography


Crumley, Carole L.


DeMarrais, Elizabeth, Luis Jaime Castillo, and Timothy Earle

Douglas, John E.

Elson, Mark D., and David R. Abbott

Feinman, Gary M.

Feinman, Gary M., and Jill Neitzel

Fish, Suzanne K., and Paul R. Fish

Flannery, Kent V.

Graves, William M., and Katherine A. Spielmann

Hayden, Brian

Harry, Karen G., and James M. Bayman
New York.

Hegmon, Michelle

Henry, Susan L.

Kintigh, Keith W.

Klein, Terry H.

Kohler, Timothy A., Matthew W. Van Pelt, and Lorene Y. L. Yap

Lass, Barbara

Leone, Mark P.

Lucero, Lisa J.

McGuire, Randall H., Saitta, Dean

Miller, Daniel

Mills, Barbara J.


Muller, Jon
Nelson, Ben A.  

Orser, Charles E. Jr.  

Paynter, Robert  

Peebles, Christopher S., and Susan M. Kus  

Potter, James M.  

Potter, James M., and Elizabeth M. Perry  

Rautman, Alison E.  

Sebastian, Lynne  

Spielmann, Katherine A.  

Trigger, Bruce G.  

Trubitt, Mary Beth D.  

Upham, Steadman, and Fred Plog  

Van Keuren, Scott  

Whalen, Michael E., and Paul E. Minnis


Wiessner, Polly


Wills, W. H.


Wolf, Eric R.


Wurst, LouAnn, and Randall H. McGuire


Yoffee, Norman


**The following books are on reserve for this class:**

Dietler, Michael, and Brian Hayden.


Miller, Daniel, and Christopher Tilley


Neitzel, Jill E.

1999 *Great Towns and Regional Polities in the Prehistoric American Southwest and Southeast*. University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

Price, T. Douglas, and Gary M. Feinman