

Analytical Inquiry: Society and Culture  
**ANCIENT WORLDS**  
ANTH 1910  
Winter 2011

Instructor: Professor Dean Saitta  
Department of Anthropology

Office: Sturm Hall 105  
Office Hours: Thursday 1:30-3:00; also by appointment  
Office Phone: 871-2680  
Email: [dsaitta@du.edu](mailto:dsaitta@du.edu)

### Course Objectives

Courses in the “Analytical Inquiry: Society and Culture” curriculum introduce you to variation in the products of human culture (including written texts, art, artifacts, and other creative expressions) and ways to interpret these cultural products.

This particular course uses the field of archaeology to fulfill this goal. It investigates human belief and creativity in what we’ll call *deep history*: the 50,000 years or so that stretch from the appearance of modern *Homo sapiens* up to and including the rise of the first great civilizations of the Old and New Worlds. These aspects of life are examined through the study of human *material culture*, including portable objects, representational art, architecture, monuments, and culturally-modified landscapes. A key underlying concept of the course is that material culture forms a unique narrative or *text* about the past history of humankind. This text is unique because everyone who has ever lived has helped to write it. You will learn how to interpret this text, recognize its multiple authors, and distill its larger social and cultural meaning. Specifically, you will come to:

(1) understand that human beings make sense of the world (and their place in it) by giving it *meaning* in many different ways;

(2) appreciate the *materiality* of human existence; that is, the reciprocal relationship between people and things. People depend on material things to make the world meaningful and things, in turn, shape the way that people think and behave.

(3) recognize the *duality* of archaeology as a field that (a) produces objective knowledge of the past at the same time that it (b) conducts a cultural and political dialogue with the present.

Case material for this course is drawn from human cultures located widely across time and space. Much of the case material will likely be familiar to you. It includes material about Ice Age artists of Africa and Europe (*Caveworld*), ancient priests and astronomers of the Near East, Britain, and North America (*Tellworld*, *Hengeworld*, *Puebloworld*, *Moundworld*), and the great temple and tomb builders of Egypt and Mexico (*Pyramidworld*). In the words of Brian Fagan, our textbook author, the case material stretches “from the French Caves of Lascaux to the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan”. The aim of the course is to give you a taste of variation in how humans have creatively reflected upon and expressed their place in the world across time, space, and cultural context. In so doing it aims to expand your understanding of what it means to be human.

### Classroom Etiquette

I assume that you are enrolled in this course because you have a serious interest in the subject matter. Thus, I expect you to adhere to basic standards of classroom etiquette. These include arriving to class on time and refraining from internet surfing, text messaging, etc. Mobile phones and other portable electronic devices should be stowed away. A five minute break half-way through class is provided for you as a courtesy. Do not leave class at the break unless you have a compelling reason that you’ve discussed with me beforehand. Attendance is not taken but because 10% of your grade is showing up and participating absences are obvious and noted.

### Course Ground Rules and Requirements

Requirements include regular attendance and active participation in class discussion; completion of two mid-term exams and a final cumulative exam, and completion of several short in-class “Freewrites”. The Freewrites will be

un-announced and will evaluate your understanding of the assigned reading, films, and course concepts. Slide shows will be posted to the Course Portfolio site located at: <http://portfolio.du.edu/201110ANTH19104044>. I do not make lecture notes available but class outlines and study guides will be distributed in class and posted to the Portfolio. The films shown in class are generally not available in the Library, so it will be important for you to be in class to view them. The size of the class precludes the films being offered to individuals on loan, unless you have a very good reason.

### **Grading**

Your written work is expected to conform to the basic requirements for good scholarship: creativity, completeness, clarity in communication, proper citation of utilized sources, and correct spelling and grammar.

The contribution of each piece of required work to your final course grade is as follows:

Midterm #1: 30%  
Midterm #2: 30%  
Final Exam: 30%  
Class/Freewrites: 10%

### **Criteria for grading exam essays consist of the following:**

“A” Work (90-100 on a numerical scale): Work that is clearly exceptional and insightful, demonstrating original, creative thought. Arguments and supporting points are clear and well-developed. The work is complete (i.e., all parts are there) and follows a clear, logical organization. The work incorporates information from the variety of sources available to you: assigned readings, lecture and class discussion notes, other courses that you have taken or are currently taking, personal experience. The work is free of internal contradictions or inconsistencies. There are no grammatical and spelling errors.

“B” Work (80-90): Work that is solid and fulfills the assignment. Ideas and arguments are clearly expressed but there are minor lapses in development. The work contains a logical progression of ideas, but not all evidence or support points are clearly related to the main argument or idea. The work may contain a few grammatical problems but not enough to make reading difficult.

“C” Work (70-80): Work that is adequate but less effective in responding to the assignment. It deals in generalizations without demonstrating a deeper understanding of the material. It is difficult to find a coherent, logical structure in the work. Sentences may be awkward or confusing enough to make reading difficult.

“D” Work (60-70): Work that is inadequate in that it lacks a clear argument and only minimally responds to the assignment. Ideas and arguments are vague and under-developed. The organization is difficult to follow, and the work offers insufficient evidence to support its main points. The work is incomplete.

“F Work: Work that does not respond to the assignment, has no central argument or idea, and uses no source material. There is no apparent organization. There is no supporting evidence for the main argument, or the evidence/examples are irrelevant.

### **Freewrites will be graded on a 10 point scale:**

10 points: clear, detailed, especially insightful.  
9 points: clear and detailed.  
8 points: details need elaborating but generally answered the question(s).  
7 points: misses the mark; too much unnecessary information.  
6 points: too vague.  
0 points: missed the assignment.

### Final Exam

The final exam for the course is scheduled for **Thursday, March 10 from 12:00-1:50. Do not arrange to leave for spring break until after the exam on the 10th. No exceptions!**

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting other people's work or ideas as your own. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty and it will not be tolerated. Disciplinary action will be taken on suspected cases of plagiarism and other academically dishonest acts.

You are expected to adhere to the **University's Honor Code** which stipulates the following: *"All members of the University community are entrusted with the responsibility of observing certain ethical goals and values as they relate to academic integrity. Essential to the fundamental purpose of the University is the commitment to the principles of truth and honesty. The Honor Code is designed so that responsibility for upholding these principles lies with the individual as well as the entire community. The Honor Code fosters and advances an environment of ethical conduct in the academic community of the University, the foundation of which includes the pursuit of academic honesty and integrity. Through an atmosphere of mutual respect we enhance the value of our education and bring forth the highest standard of academic excellence. Members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, administrators and trustees, must not commit any intentional misrepresentation or deception in academic or professional matters."*

### Required Reading

There is one required book for the course, and it is available in the University Bookstore:

**Fagan, Brian 1998 *From Black Land to Fifth Sun*. Perseus Books, Reading Massachusetts.**

I reserve the right to add short supplementary readings to the required reading list.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic/Reading</u>
1	Jan 3	Introduction and Expectations. Major Themes and Big Ideas.
	Jan 5	Culture and Cosmology. Objects and Meaning. <u>READING</u> : Chapter 1.
2	Jan 10	Origins of the Modern Mind. VIDEO: "The Mind's Big Bang".
	Jan 12	<b><i>Caveworld</i></b> : The Human Cultural Explosion. <u>READING</u> : Chapter 2 (pp. 23-39; 42-50); Chapter 3 (51-53; 57-69).
3	Jan 17	NO CLASS—MLK HOLIDAY
	Jan 19	Making Meaning in the Ice Age. Exam Review.
4	Jan 24	<b>MIDTERM EXAM #1.</b>

	Jan 26	<i><b>Tellworld:</b></i> The Dynamics of Settled Village Life. VIDEO: “Iraq: The Cradle of Civilization”.
5	Jan 31	Interpreting Catalhoyuk. READING: Chapter 4.
	Feb 2	<i><b>Hengeworld:</b></i> Land, Ancestors, and Power. <u>READING:</u> Chapter 5, Chapter 6 (pp. 115-118, 123-134, 138-142). VIDEO: “Secrets of Stonehenge”
6	Feb 7	Stonehenge Then and Now. <u>READING:</u> Chapter 7.
	Feb 9	<i><b>Puebloworld:</b></i> Monumentality and Meaning in the American Southwest. VIDEO: “The Mystery of Chaco Canyon” <u>READING:</u> Chapter 8.
7	Feb 14	<i><b>Moundworld:</b></i> Earth Islands of Eastern North America. Video: “Cahokia: America’s Lost City.” <u>READING:</u> Chapter 9 (pp. 184-219).
	Feb 16	Sacred Monuments and Geographies of North America. Exam Review.
8	Feb 21	<b>MIDTERM EXAM #2.</b>
	Feb 23	<i><b>Pyramidworld: Ancient Egypt.</b></i> VIDEO: “Egypt: The Habit of Civilization” <u>READING:</u> Chapter 12
9	Feb 28	Great Culture and Heaven on Earth. VIDEO: “The Great Pyramid”.
	Mar 2	<i><b>Pyramidworld: Ancient Mexico.</b></i> <u>READING:</u> Chapter 13 (skim all; closely read pp. 302-305 and 321-331); Chapter 14. VIDEO: “Mexico’s Great Pyramids”
10	Mar 7	The Ends of Empire. VIDEO: “Maya and Aztecs.” <u>READING:</u> Epilogue.
	Mar 9	Summary of Themes. Final Exam Review.
	Mar 10	<b>FINAL EXAM, 12:00-1:50.</b>