

ADAM T. SMITH
OFFICE HOURS: TH. 1-4PM

WINTER QUARTER 2001
ANTHROPOLOGY 581
FRIDAY 2:00-4:50

[HTTP://HOME.UCHICAGO.EDU/~ATSMITH/PAGES/COURSES.HTML](http://home.uchicago.edu/~atsmith/pages/courses.html)

CURRENT DIRECTIONS IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORY EPISTEMOLOGY AND DISENCHANTMENT

This series of seminars examines the most pressing concerns of contemporary archaeological theory. Since the advent of the post-processual critique in the 1980s, a host of issues—ontological, epistemological, theoretical, practical—have served to focus debate and frame attempts at constructive theory-building. The purpose of this class will be to interrogate both the content of extant models and their philosophical foundations. We will focus on four primary schools of thought: "late" processualism (including behavioral and evolutionary schools), critical Marxism, interpretive post-processualism, and the various emerging attempts to either synthesize divergent perspectives or move beyond entrenched points of conflict. The goal of the seminar will be to evaluate each school in reference to both general philosophy and their value to the illumination of the archaeological record and to identify possible openings for the future development of archaeological thought.

The central topic of this seminar will be the contemporary debates over the status of archaeological knowledge and the limits to the disciplinary disenchantment inaugurated by the post-processual critique. We will examine facets of the original critique of processual archaeology forwarded in the early 1980s and the reactions within various schools of thought. Our emphasis throughout will be on delineating the terms of archaeology's current conflict over epistemology and searching for ways around or through critical points of disagreement. Prerequisite: Anthropology 390

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students will be required to submit two short essays during the term on assigned topics, both of which will be described in more detail in class. The first essay, due at the beginning of our week 5 meeting, will focus on developing a critique of the late processual responses to the post-processual critique. The second essay, due at the beginning of our week 9 meeting, will ask students to develop productive directions for breaking through the current epistemological impasse.

TEXTS:

The following texts have been ordered from the Seminary Coop Bookstore. The remaining required readings will be made available in a packet. An asterisk (*) denotes the recommended, as opposed to required, readings.

Hodder, I.

1986 *Reading the Past*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Hodder, I.

1999 *The Archaeological Process: An Introduction*. Blackwell, Oxford.

Kehoe, A. B.

1998 *The Land of Prehistory*. Routledge, New York.

OUTLINE OF LECTURES AND READINGS

I. Disenchantment: The Post-Processual Critique

Week 1. Archaeological Interpretation: The Objects of Study

Hodder, I.

1986 *Reading the Past*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Kehoe, A. B.

1998 *The Land of Prehistory*. Routledge, New York. Chs. 1-8.

Week 2. Knowing the Past: The Subject at Hand

Hodder, I.

1999 *The Archaeological Process: An Introduction*. Blackwell, Oxford. Chs. 1-5.

Shanks, M. and C. Tilley

1987 *Social Theory and Archaeology*. Polity Press, Cambridge. Chs. 1-4.

II. Reclaiming Certainty: The Processual Reaction

Week 3. Rebutting the Critique: Old New Archaeology and Middle Range Theory

Binford, L. R.

1989 Science to Seance, or Processual to "Post-Processual" Archaeology. In *Debating Archaeology*, pp. 27-40. Academic Press, San Diego.

Earle, T. K. and R. W. Preucel

1987 Processual Archaeology and the Radical Critique. *Current Anthropology* 28(4):501-538.

Trigger, B. G.

1995 Expanding Middle-Range Theory. *Antiquity* 69(264):449-458.

Watson, R. A.

1991 What the New Archaeology Has Accomplished. *Current Anthropology* 32(3):275-291.

Week 4. Ignoring the Critique: Behavioral and Evolutionary Epistemologies

Lyman, R. L. and M. J. O'Brien

1998 The Goals of Evolutionary Archaeology: History and Explanation. *Current Anthropology* 39(5):615-652.

O'Brien, M. J.

1996 The Historical Development of an Evolutionary Archaeology: A Selectionist Approach. In *Darwinian Archaeologies*, edited by H. D. G. Maschner, pp. 17-32. Plenum Press, New York.

Schiffer, M. B.

1995 *Behavioral Archaeology: First Principles*. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City. Ch. 23 (pp. 251-253).

Schiffer, M. B.

1988 The Structure of Archaeological Theory. *American Antiquity* 53:461-485.

Week 5. Co-opting the Critique: Cognitive Archaeology [Essay 1 due]

Mithen, S.

1996 *The Prehistory of the Mind*. Thames and Hudson, London. Chs. 4, 6.

Renfrew, C.

1998 Mind and Matter: Cognitive Archaeology and External Symbolic Storage. In *Cognition and Material Culture: The Archaeology of Symbolic Storage*, edited by C. Renfrew and C. Scarre. McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, Cambridge.

Renfrew, A. C.

1994 Towards a Cognitive Archaeology. In *The Ancient Mind: Elements of a Cognitive Archaeology*, edited by A. C. Renfrew and E. B. W. Zubrow, pp. 3-12. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

*Whitley, D. S.

1992 Prehistory and Post-Positivist Science: A Prolegomenon to Cognitive Archaeology. *Archaeological Method and Theory* 4:57-100.

III. Normalizing the Crisis: Post-Processual Reformulations

Week 6. The Political: Feminist and Critical Marxist Reformulations

*Leone, M., P. Potter and P. Shackel

1987 Toward a Critical Archaeology. *Current Anthropology* 28:283-302.

*Rowlands, M.

1984 Objectivity and Subjectivity in Archaeology. In *Marxist Perspectives in Archaeology*, edited by M. Spriggs, pp. 108-113. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Wilkie, L. A. and K. M. Bartoy

2000 A Critical Archaeology Revisited. *Current Anthropology* 41(5):747-777.

*Wylie, A.

1985 Putting Shakertown Back Together: Critical Theory in Archaeology. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 4:133-147.

A DEBATE ON POLITICS AND EPISTEMOLOGY, CALL:

Wylie, A.

1992 The Interplay of Evidential Constraints and Political Interests: Recent Archaeological Research on Gender. *American Antiquity* 57(1):15-35.

AND RESPONSES:

Fotiadis, M.

1994 What is Archaeology's 'Mitigated Objectivism' Mitigated By? Comments on Wylie. *American Antiquity* 59(3):545-555.

Little, B. J.

1994 Consider the Hermaphroditic Mind: Comment on the 'Interplay of Evidential Constraints and Political Interests'. *American Antiquity* 59(3):539-544.

Wylie, A.

1994 On 'Capturing Facts Alive in the Past' (or Present): Response to Fotiadis and to Little. *American Antiquity* 59(3):556-560.

Week 7. The Personal: Looking to Hermeneutics and Phenomenology

Hodder, I.

1991 Interpretive Archaeology and its Role. *American Antiquity* 56(1):7-18.

Knapp, A. B.

1996 Archaeology Without Gravity? Postmodernism and the Past. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 3(2):127-158.

*Kosso, P.

1991 Method in Archaeology: Middle-Range Theory as Hermeneutics. *American Antiquity* 56(4):621-627.

Tarlow, S.

2000 Emotion in Archaeology. *Current Anthropology* 41(5):713-746.

Week 8. The Post-Processual Condition: From Radical Chic to Rear Garde?

Kehoe, A. B.

1998 *The Land of Prehistory*. Routledge, New York. Chs. 9-11.

*Patterson, T. C.

1990 Some Theoretical Tensions Within and Between the Processual and Postprocessual Archaeologies. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 9:189-200.

Preucel, R. W.

1995 The Postprocessual Condition. *Journal of Archaeological Research* 3(2):147-175.

Wylie, A.

2000 Questions of Evidence, Legitimacy, and the (Dis)Unity of Science. *American Antiquity* 65(2):227-237.

IV. The Limits of Disenchantment

Week 9. Epistemological Recidivism [Essay 2 due]

Kehoe, A. B.

1998 *The Land of Prehistory*. Routledge, New York. Ch. 12.

*Kohl, P.

1993 Limits to a Post-Processual Archaeology (or, The Dangers of a New Scholasticism). In *Archaeological Theory: Who Sets the Agenda?*, edited by N. Yoffee and A. Sherratt, pp. 13-19. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Trigger, B.

1998 Archaeology and Epistemology: Dialoguing Across the Darwinian Chasm. *American Journal of Archaeology* 102:1-34.

*Tschauner, H.

1996 Middle-Range Theory, Behavioral Archaeology, and Postempiricist Philosophy of Science in Archaeology. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 3(1):1-30.

VanPool, C. S. and T. L. VanPool

1999 The Scientific Nature of Postprocessualism. *American Antiquity* 64(1):33-53.

*Wylie, A.

1993 A Proliferation of New Archaeologies: "Beyond Objectivism and Relativism".
In *Archaeological Theory: Who Sets the Agenda?*, edited by N. Yoffee and A. Sherratt, pp. 20-26. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Week 10. The Return of the Real?

*Eagleton, T.

1996 *The Illusions of Postmodernism*. Blackwell, Oxford. Pp. 1-19, 45-68.

*Foster, H.

1996 "Whatever Happened to Postmodernism?" From *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*. MIT Press, Cambridge.

Kus, S.

1992 Toward an Archaeology of Body and Soul. In *Representations in Archaeology*, edited by J.-C. Gardin and C. S. Peebles, pp. 168-177. Indiana University Press, Bloomington.

Various Authors

2001 Papers from forthcoming special issue of *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, Adam T. Smith and Monica L. Smith, guest editors.