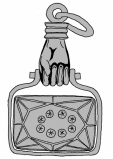
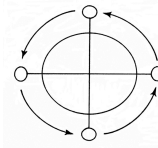


**Archaeology of the African Diaspora**  
ANTH/AFST 142  
Spring 2010



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**Prof. Christopher Matthews**

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Office hour: Tuesday 3:45-4:45 pm

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**Course Description**

This course examines the archaeology of the African Diaspora from the beginnings of the transatlantic slave trade to the early twentieth century. The objective is to understand and contextualize the material worlds of African Diaspora communities within the greater historiographies of the Atlantic world.

We will examine in detail the question of culture in the Diaspora. African Diaspora archaeology, in dialogue with other scholarly fields, has struggled with how to engage the Diaspora given the convergence of diverse African



backgrounds with forced migration, enslavement, freedom, racism, resistance, as well as factors related to community formation, survival, and memory. Questions of African retentions, transformations and intercultural exchange dominate the field. Exploring archaeological findings from sites in West Africa, the Caribbean, Brazil, and the United States, this course considers the archaeological contribution to understanding unity and diversity in the everyday experience of the Diaspora. Topics covered include studies of landscapes, foodways, innovations in production, consumption, religion, marronage, racism, and heritage politics.

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## Required Readings



- Deetz, James, F. 1996. *In Small Things Forgotten, rev. and exp. edition*. Anchor Books.
- Ferguson, Leland, 1992. *Uncommon Ground: Archaeology and Early African-America*. Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Singleton, Theresa, ed. 1999. *"I, Too, Am America": Archaeological Studies of African-American Life*. University of Virginia Press.
- Additional readings will be available on Blackboard.

An important additional resource is the *African Diaspora Archaeology Newsletter* <http://www.diaspora.uiuc.edu/newsletter.html>,

which contains information on current research, recent publications, descriptions of projects, as well as short articles.

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## Course Requirements:

### Class Participation and Discussion Board (25%)

This course will combine lecture with discussion of the readings. Lectures will highlight major issues raised in the readings, but I will not cover every assigned reading in explicit detail. Lectures will also introduce information and provide examples not found in the readings. I expect your participation in class to ensure you understand the materials and can see connections between topics and case studies. To help you prepare for class, I ask that you **post a comment on the readings on the Blackboard discussion board prior to each class meeting**. You should identify the central themes in the readings and offer your thoughts on the significance of this work to understanding history and culture in the Diaspora.



### Archaeological techniques quiz (10%)

As this course does not require a prerequisite, you need to become acquainted with the basic methods and techniques archaeologists use to generate data on the material culture of the African Diaspora. This quiz will cover some basic characteristics of locating and defining archaeological sites, data recovery, and interpretation. This information will be covered during the first set of class meetings. The quiz will be in class on February 9.



### Africanisms discussion and summary paper (30%)

We will have an in-class discussion on the question of African retentions, creolization, and change on March 2. Student teams will select one position to research, introduce and defend. Resources for the discussion are listed in the schedule below. Assignments will be first come, first serve.

Following the discussion each student will prepare a 6-8 page essay on the dimensions of retention and change in the Diaspora as reflected in the work of cultural theorists and applied in the African Diaspora archaeological research discussed by Deetz and Ferguson. Papers are due March 9.

### Final essay (35%)

A final essay exam will elaborate on the midterm in a critical evaluation of the archaeological evidence of retentions and/or innovations in the Diaspora in one arena of archaeological study covered in class, such as landscapes, foodways, common artifacts, religion, resistance, or modern heritage politics. You may explore other topics not covered in class with my permission. You may use examples from the class lectures and readings, but you are expected to delve into the archaeological literature to discuss research not presented in lectures. I have provided some additional recommended readings in the course schedule below, and I am happy to help you locate additional sources. In this paper you will review the retentions and change debate detailed in your first paper. Then you will apply this understanding position in a critical review of specific archaeological studies. This paper will be 8-10 pages in length. It is due at the scheduled meeting time for the final exam.



An alternative final research project on African Diaspora archaeological sites on Long Island is also possible. This project involves primary research to document sites on Long Island significant to African Diaspora archaeology. Papers will provide an overview of a site's history, review archaeological findings and/or potentials, and offer a contextual analysis of the site's connection to Diaspora history and culture. Please see me prior to embarking on this project for advice and direction.

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## **Course Schedule**

Note: this schedule is subject to minor changes. These will be announced and an updated schedule will be posted on Blackboard.

All readings except those in required books listed above will be available on reserve or through Blackboard.

**Jan 26, 28, Feb 2, 4, 9**

### ***Archaeology of the people with and without history***

#### Required Readings

Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten*, entire

McIntosh et al. *People without History*

Singleton in "*I, Too, Am America*"

#### Recommended

Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, Chs. 1&2

February 4 Film: *Traces of the Trade*, Cultural Center Theater

### **Archaeological Techniques quiz: Feb 9**

**Feb 18, 23, 25 The Archaeology of Slavery**

#### Required Readings

Ferguson, *Uncommon Ground*, entire

Film: *Unearthing Secret America* (available at

<http://www.babelgum.com/117876/scientific-american-frontiers-unearthing-secret-america.html>)

**March 2**

### ***What is the Diaspora? Culture, Creolization, Africanisms and Africans***

#### Required Readings

Posnansky in "*I, Too, Am America*"

DeCorse in "*I, Too, Am America*"

Perry and Paynter in "*I, Too, Am America*"

#### Recommended

Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, Ch. 8

Holloway, *The Origins of African-American Culture*

**March 4**

***Class Discussion on the question of retentions, cultural change, creolization, history, and politics in the study of the Diaspora.***

Resources

Herskovitz, *The Myth of the Negro Past*

Mintz and Price, *The Birth of African-American Culture*

Frazier, *The Negro Family in the United States*

Iyo, *Historiographical Issues in the African Diaspora Experience*

Gomez, *Vesey's Challenge and Tad's Query*

Matory, *The "New World" Surrounds an Ocean*

Holt, *Slavery and Freedom in the Atlantic World*

**Papers due March 11**

**March 9, 11**

***Archaeologies of the Slave Trade in West Africa***

Required Readings

DeCorse, *Culture, Contact, Continuity and Change*

Kelly, *The Archaeology of African-European Interaction*

Ogundiran, *Of Small Things Remembered*

Recommended

Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, Chs 3-4

MacEachern, *State Formation and Enslavement*

McIntosh, *Tools for Understanding Transformation and Continuity*

**March 16, 23**

***Landscape and Domestic Space in the Diaspora***

Required Readings

Epperson in *"I, Too, Am America"*

Upton, *White and Black Landscapes in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Virginia*

Heath and Bennett, *The Little Spots Allow'd Them*

Edwards, *"Trash" Revisited*

Fitts, *Landscapes of Northern Bondage*

Recommended

Pulsipher, *Here Where the Old Time People Be*

Pulsipher, *The Landscapes and Ideational Roles of Slave Gardens*

Heath, *Bounded Yards and Fluid Boundaries*

Singleton, *Slavery and Spatial Dialectics*

Battle-Baptiste, *In This Here Place*

Chan, *Bringing the Out Kitchen In?*

**March 18**

***Guest Lecturer: Prof. Jenna Coplin***

**March 25**

***Colonoware and other distinctive artifacts in the Diaspora***

Required Readings

Emerson in "*I, Too, Am America*"

Mouer et al in "*I, Too, Am America*"

Handler, Aspects of the Atlantic Slave Trade

Wilkie, Glass-Knapping at a Louisiana Plantation

Wilkie, Culture Bought: Evidence of Creolization

Goucher, The Memory of Iron

Recommended

Heath, Yabbas, Monkeys, Jugs, and Jars

Hauser, Hawking Your Wares

Hauser, Between Urban and Rural

Hauser, and Armstrong, Embedded Identities

Goucher, African Metallurgy in the Atlantic World

McDonald, Independent Economic Production by Slaves

Kelly and Norman, Medium Vessels

***Foodways and Medicine in the Diaspora***

Recommended Readings

McKee in "*I, Too, Am America*"

Yentsch, Excavating the South's African American Food History

Warner, Ham Hocks on Your Cornflakes

Edwards-Ingram, African American Medicine

Franklin, The Archaeological Dimensions of Soul Food

**March 30, April 1**

**Spring Break**

**April 6, 8**

***Spirit, Belief, Death and Burial in Diasporic perspective***

Required Readings

Brown, Interwoven Traditions

Stine, et al, Blue Beads as African-American Cultural Symbols.

Leone, African America

Mack and Blakey, The New York African Burial Ground Project

Davidson, Identity and Violent Death

Recommended

Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, Ch. 9

Brown and Cooper, Structural Continuity

Brown, Material Culture and Community Structure

Fennel, BaKongo Identity and Symbolic Expression in the Americas

Leone and Fry, Conjuring in the Big House Kitchen

Orser, The Archaeology of African-American Slave Religion  
Russell, African American Spirituality at the Hermitage  
Garman, The Color Line and the Material Culture of Death

**April 13-15**

***Resistance and Marronage in the Diaspora***

Required Readings

Deagan in "*I, Too, Am America*"

Epperson, The Contested Commons

Matthews, The Archaeology of Race and African American Resistance

Orser and Funari, Archaeology and Slave Resistance

Recommended

Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, Ch. 10

Weik, Allies, Adversaries and Kin

Agorsah, Scars of Brutality: Archaeology of Maroons

Funari, The Archaeological Study of the African Diaspora in Brazil

**April 20-22**

***Race and racism post-emancipation***

Required Readings

Bastian in "*I, Too, Am America*"

Paynter and Allen, W.E.B. Du Bois

Fennell, *Historical Landscapes of New Philadelphia, Illinois*.

Mullins, Race and the Genteel Consumer

Recommended

Brandon and Davidson. The Landscape of Van Winkle's Mill

Baumann, Ragtime Archaeology

Davidson and Tennant. A Potential Archaeology of Rosewood

Mullins, Racializing the Commonplace Landscape

**April 27, 27, May 4**

***Politics and practice in African and African Diaspora archaeology***

Required Readings

Chappell in "*I, Too, Am America*"

Osei-Tutu, Ghana's "Slave Castles"

La Roche and Blakey, Seizing Intellectual Power

Matthews, The Location of Archaeology

McDavid, Descendants, Decisions, and Power

Franklin, Why are there So Few Black Archaeologists?

Recommended

Epperson, Critical Race Theory

Matthews, Archaeology and Obama

## Archaeology of the African Diaspora Spring 2010

Note: this listing will be updated regularly during the semester, please periodically check Blackboard to access updated files.

### Readings Bibliography

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