**CAS AR 375/GRS AR775:**
**ORAL HISTORY & WRITTEN RECORDS IN ARCHAEOLOGY**

Class meets TR 3:30–5 pm, CAS 226

Instructor: Prof. Mary Beaudry <beaudry@bu.edu>  Voicemail: 8-1650  Semester II, 2009–2010
Rm. STO 345C, 675 Comm. Ave.  Office Hrs.: TR 2–3 pm, W 3–4 pm, & by appt.

**Course Objectives**

This course is designed to serve as a practical introduction to the use of archival and oral sources in text-aided archaeology. It involves a survey of the use of oral and documentary sources by archaeologists, giving attention to the type and scope of documents—defined in the broadest sense—available and to their critical analysis as a step in constructing what has been variously termed anthropological history, historical ethnography, or documentary archaeology. To this end we will explore recent developments in historical anthropology, mainstream archaeology, and the “new culture history” as well as the intersection of history, anthropology, and material culture studies in historical archaeology. A portion of the course will be devoted to the topic of ethnohistory and to recent developments in the use of oral history in the study of African-American and Native American cultures. We will end the course with critical readings and discussions about ways in which historical archaeologists have constructed alternative archaeological narratives.

**Texts (available for purchase at the Boston University Bookstore):**


Readings indicated on the syllabus by an asterisk (*) will be available on the course web site and/or on reserve in the Stone Science Library, 4th floor, 675 Commonwealth Avenue.

**Course Format and Requirements**

The class will be conducted in a combined lecture/seminar format; a portion of class meetings will be devoted to discussion and in-class exercises in documentary analysis.

All students enrolled in the course are expected to design and carry out an original research project, in order to develop proficiency in documentary research and analysis or in the interpretation of information conveyed in informant interviews. This project will normally culminate in a final paper of from 10–15 pages in length for undergraduates, 20–25 pages in length for graduate students. Alternative formats for the final product are subject to the approval of the instructor. *Note that all paper topics must be approved by the instructor on or before*
February 18, 2010. Each **graduate** student enrolled in AR775 will be required to give a brief (ca. 15-minute) presentation on a book or other published work (see handout). In addition to the research paper, students will complete two exercises in documentary analysis, each assignment comprising 15% of the grade. Details on the exercises will be provided in separate handouts and posted to the course web site. For **undergraduate** students enrolled in AR375, there is also a final examination, cumulative in nature.

To summarize, grades for the course will be based upon the following: **Undergraduates**: class attendance and participation: 20%; 2 practical exercises: 15% each or 30% total; final paper: 25%; final examination, 25%. **Graduate students**: class attendance and participation: 20%; in-class presentation: 10%; 2 practical exercises: 15% each or 30% total; final paper: 40%.

All students are expected to attend all classes and to participate in class discussion.

**Add/Drop Info:**
You should also be aware of CAS policy regarding adding, dropping, and withdrawing from classes; see [http://www.bu.edu/bulletins/und/item10.html](http://www.bu.edu/bulletins/und/item10.html). Please take special note of the following: A standard course dropped during the first five weeks of classes will not appear on the student’s permanent record. A standard course dropped after the first five weeks of classes will appear on the student’s record as W, and the student will be charged for the course. Standard courses may be dropped up to the end of the 10th week of classes. After that point, no course may be dropped.

**Academic Integrity:**
Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the University’s policy about what constitutes plagiarism ([http://www.bu.edu/cas/undergraduate/conductcode.html](http://www.bu.edu/cas/undergraduate/conductcode.html)); please note that plagiarism or cheating will most decidedly have a negative effect on your grade and perhaps even your collegiate career.

**Course Web Site**
All class participants have access to the course materials through the course web site on Blackboard; here you will find course documents such as the syllabus, announcements about the course, copies of or access to course readings, links to WWW sites you will visit as part of your course assignments, and a communications center from which you can communicate with other members of the class. Here is where you will find copies of any reading assignments that are not in your textbooks for the course. I’ll also be posting course announcements to the Web site. Please plan to visit the site regularly.

You can access the CAS AR375/GRS AR775 web site by clicking on the class number/name as posted in your schedule on the Student Link portion of the Boston University web pages, or you can point your browser to [http://blackboard.bu.edu](http://blackboard.bu.edu), then click on the link to the College of Arts and Sciences (there is one web site for both undergrads and graduate student sections of the course). You will be prompted to login; to do so, enter your BU login name (the portion of your email address that comes before the @). When prompted to enter a password, type in your regular password. Once you are “in” you can change your password and other details of your account, arrange to have your course email forwarded to another address, and so on. (If you’ve used the system before, it will have stored any changes you made to your personal details.) Follow the on-line instructions.
Meeting Topics and Reading Assignments

Part I: Documents and the Archaeologist

Jan 14  Introduction to the course
Course mechanics, &c.

Jan 19  Types of documents: primary & secondary sources


Jan 21  Blurred genres, open frontiers: historical anthropology & archaeology


Jan 26  Writing historical archaeology

Jan 28  Paleography & terminology
*Handouts (will be posted on course web site in advance of class meeting)

Feb 2  Understanding the impact of literacy

Discussion/Group Exercise: Reading 17th-century handwriting

Feb 4  Probate inventories
Documentary Archaeology, Chapters 4–8, 13.

Feb 9  Discussion/Group Exercise: deconstructing a probate inventory

Feb 11  Who owned this land? Deeds, plats, surveys, maps
Guest lecturer: Prof. Claire Dempsey, Director, Preservation Studies

Documentary Archaeology, Chapter 12

**Feb 18** Representing land & landscape: atlases, paintings, maps, &c.

Documentary Archaeology, Chapter 9


**Feb. 23** Personal papers, diaries, letters, and account books

Documentary Archaeology, Chapters 3, 14.

*Baxter, W. T. Accounting in Colonial America.


**Feb 25** Court records


**Mar 2** Business, institutional, and military records

Documentary Archaeology, Chapters 10, 15.


Mar 4 Newspapers, tax & census records

Documentary Archaeology, Chapters 16, 17


Mar 16 Discussion/Group Exercise: records relating to the transatlantic slave trade

*Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database:
http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces

*Hicks, Dan, 2000, Ethnicity, Race and the Archaeology of the Atlantic Slave Trade. Assemblage 5: http://www.assemblage.group.shef.ac.uk/5/hicks.html

*African Diaspora Archaeology Network: http://www.diaspora.uiuc.edu/background.html

Mar 18 Artifacts as documents

Documentary Archaeology, Chapter 2


Mar 23 Visual sources & Discussion/Group Exercise: reading an artifact

*Parker Miller, Mark S. Obtaining Information via Defective Documents: A Search for the Mandan in George Catlin’s Paintings. Chapter 11 (pp. 296–320) In Nassaney and Johnson, eds., Interpretations of Native North American Life.
*Selections tba from thematic issue of Historical Archaeology on artworks & historical AR

Part II: Ethnohistory and Oral History in Archaeological Interpretation

Mar 25 Ethnohistory: definitions, methods, approaches

Documentary Archaeology, Chapter 11
*Knapp, ed., Archaeology, Annales, and Ethnohistory, Chapter 1

Mar 30 Ethnohistory and material culture studies


Apr 1 Ethnohistory, revisionist history, and archaeology


Apr 6 Oral history: background and methods, craft and meaning/archaeology

*Sommer, Barbara W., & Mary Kay Quinlan, Oral History Manual, Chapters 1–4 AASLH/AltaMira, 2002).
*Ritchie, Donald A., Doing Oral History, Chapter 1, Chapter 4 (Twayne Publishers, 1995).


Apr 8 Oral history & archaeology: a case study
Guest lecturer: Dr. Karen B. Metheny

*Metheny, Karen B., From the Miners' Doublehouse (U of Tennessee Press, 2007), Chapter 5 and Appendix B.

*Video of interview w/Dr. Metheny: http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-3893453994783168512# (optional to view)

Part III: Historical Archaeology as Narrative Craft

Apr 13 Reading archaeological stories
Joyce, Rosemary, The Languages of Archaeology, focus on Chapters 1 and 2, skim the rest


Apr 15 Telling archaeological stories

*Beaudry, Mary C., 2008, The Intersection of Microhistory and Historical Archaeology in Writing Archaeological Biographies of Two New England Merchants. In Small Worlds: Method and Meaning in Microhistory, ed. by Christopher DeCorse, James Brooks, and John Walton. SAR Press, Santa Fe, NM.

*Praetzellis, Mary, ed., Archaeologists as Storytellers. Historical Archaeology 32(1), 1998, articles by Dan Mouer, Lu Ann De Cunzo, Robin Ryder, Adrian Praetzellis, & Rebecca Yamin

Apr 20 The Intersection of narrative history, archaeology, and fiction
Schrire, Digging Through Darkness

Apr 27 Historical archaeology as literary genre?

Wilkie, Lost Boys

Apr 29 Overview & review

Papers due April 30, 2010.

AR375 Final Examination: Tuesday May 4, 2010, 3–5 pm