**Fantastic Archaeology: Mysteries of the Human Past**  
Anthropology 4149  
University of South Florida - Summer B 2000  
A Web-Based Distance Learning Course

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**COURSE OBJECTIVES AND EMPHASES**

Mysteries of the human past, including the Lost Continent of Atlantis, Ancient Astronauts, Piltdown Man, Psychic Archaeology, Noah's Ark, the 'Myth' of the Moundbuilders, and the Shroud of Turin will be discussed in detail in this course. *Fantastic Archaeology* is also about how archaeologists know things, and how to properly evaluate archaeological and scientific evidence before drawing conclusions. The skills in critical thinking that will be emphasized in this course have many practical applications beyond archaeology, both in the business world and in everyday life. This course fulfills the Major Works & Major Issues Exit Requirement, and can be taken S/U. This course is also specifically designed for non-anthropology majors (there are no prerequisites); while Anthropology majors are also welcome, this course does not count towards Anthropology major credit.

**REQUIRED READINGS**


Additional scholarly articles, available on-line, which expand on topics presented in the course.

A note about readings: The complete bibliographic reference for all assigned readings is included in the syllabus on the following pages, so that you may easily locate the original if you wish to see the color illustrations. This may be especially worthwhile for the articles from *National Geographic* and other popular magazines.

**FILMS**

A number of films are scheduled for viewing at the USF library media center (Tampa campus, 6th floor) during the appropriate week of the course. The films will subsequently be placed on reserve for individual viewing. The films will be the subject of some of the on-line discussions, and are a visual supplement to the assigned readings. Quiz questions, however, will not be drawn directly from the films.

**GRADES**

This is a senior-level exit course which requires a substantial amount of reading and time spent on assignments in addition to interactive discussion, quizzes, and viewing films. Furthermore, this is a full-semester course compressed into a six-week summer session. Students who do not keep up with the readings and assignments have not done well in the past. Course grades will be based on the posting of responses to study questions and participation in weekly discussions (12%), 6 weekly quizzes (8% each = 48%), a survey project (10%), a web-based research project (25%), and constructive commentary on other students' web projects (5%). An "A" will be based on a curved standardized score between 90-100; "B" for 80-89, "C" for 70-79, and "D" for 65-69. There will be NO make-up quizzes or excuses for late assignments except in fully documented serious circumstances. There will be on-line discussion and critical assessment of all assigned readings, and your participation will be graded.

Note: web projects will be assigned by the first week of the course. This means that some students'
projects will be due in the second week. While it may be advantageous to get the project over and done with early in the course, do not take this on if you anticipate having difficulties learning to use the webCT program.

OTHER POLICIES

Computer use and Internet access to the WebCT course site are required. All assignments may be completed using your own personal computer if equipped with a web browser (Netscape or Internet Explorer), an office suite (e.g. Microsoft Office) which includes a spreadsheet or database program, and Adobe Acrobat Reader (available free from the Adobe website). The course instructor cannot be responsible for helping you deal with hardware or software problems on your computer; the University has a number of open-use labs supplied with the necessary software, along with user assistants to help you. An on-line tutorial on the use of webCT is available, and I have provided a simplified set of instructions as well.

Students who anticipate being unable to complete assignments on time due to observation of a major religious observance must provide advance written notice of the date(s) to the instructor. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating, will be punished according to University Guidelines, and may result in the receipt of an "F" on an assignment (for plagiarism), an "F" in the course, suspension or expulsion from the University. Notes or other documentation of course content are permitted for purposes of sale only with the express written consent of the instructor.

ANTHROPOLOGY 4149 COURSE SCHEDULE

University of South Florida - Summer B 2000

Date Discussion Topics, Required Readings
7/3 1. WebCT instruction
2. Class Survey
3. Course Introduction
4. Survey Project
5. Science, Pseudoscience, and Archaeology
   Feder chap. 1
6. Epistemology: How you know what you know?
   Feder chap. 2
7. Archaeological Evidence
   Film: Archaeology: Evidence of the Past. 25 minutes.
8. Quiz 1.

7/10 1. Survey data: Analysis and Interpretation
2. The Cardiff Giant
   Feder chap. 3
   Film: The Cardiff Giant (1999). 60 minutes.
3. Piltdown Man
   Feder chap. 4
Film: Piltdown (1999). 60 minutes.

4. Dating Methods; Real Bones of Contention

5. Quiz 2

7/17

1. Who Discovered America?
Feder chap. 5
Film: Mystery of the First Americans (2000). 60 minutes.

2. After the Indians, but before Columbus?
Feder chap. 6: 98-119.

3. The Vikings
Feder chap. 6: 119-132.

4. The Myth of the Moundbuilders
Feder chap. 7
Film: Cahokia: America's Lost City (1999). 60 minutes.

5. Quiz 3

7/24

1. Survey Report Due
2. Lost Continents: Atlantis?
Feder chap. 8
3. Mediterranean Civilizations and Underwater Archaeology
4. Chariots of the Gods?
Feder chap. 9
Film: The Case of the Ancient Astronauts (1979). 57 minutes.
5. Psychic Archaeology
Feder chap. 10
6. Quiz 4

7/31 1. Archaeology and Religion. Noah's Ark
Feder chap. 11: 235-249.
2. The Shroud of Turin
Feder chap. 11: 249-264.
Van Biema, D. 1998. Science and the Shroud: the relic was declared a fake a decade ago, but millions are expected to venerate it, inspired by those who say there is truth to back their faith. Time 151(15): 53-61.
Film: Mysterious Man of the Shroud (1999). 60 minutes.
3. African Roots of Civilization

4. Quiz 5

8/6 1. Reconstructing the Past

2. Understanding the Past

3. Really Fantastic Archaeology: Cavemen, the Iceman, Stonehenge, and the Mysterious Maya
Feder chap. 12
Film: Iceman: Mummy from the Stone Age (2000). 60 minutes.
Film: Secrets of Lost Empires: Stonehenge (1997). 60 minutes.

4. Quiz 6

Survey Report
Unsubstantiated or pseudoscientific beliefs are not limited to archaeology, but also include astrology, psychic power, faith healing, creationism, reincarnation, and Afrocentrism. It is important to understand why people believe these things, especially when unscrupulous individuals take advantage of this uncritical acceptance by making claims for monetary, political, religious, or other purposes. This exercise is an attempt to identify the state of current public knowledge about a number of scientific and pseudoscientific issues, and whether any correlation exists with educational or religious background, economic status, etc.
Each student should obtain completed questionnaires from at least 10 people, preferably not all from your own family! Questionnaires may be completed online. Try to include as many non-USF students (adult friends and relatives, co-workers, members of your church, etc.) in your survey.
This is a serious study and it is very important that you obtain honest answers. If you are unable to obtain the target number of completed surveys, don't worry - we will pool the data from all students in the class before trying to interpret the results.
An electronic copy of the pooled survey results will be provided on the website, for each student to analyze and interpret using a spreadsheet program such as Microsoft Excel or Lotus 123 (instructions are provided on the use of Excel).
Working individually, take the data and identify any differences in beliefs (i.e. responses to part II of the
survey) between at least two demographic categories (e.g. age range, gender, education level, etc.). **You should examine at least three beliefs for each of two or more demographic categories.** Submit by email (attachments in Word or Wordperfect accepted) a report discussing your results and any interpretations in the equivalent of 2-3 double-spaced typed pages (about 500-800 words, not including any charts, graphs, tables, etc.). You should specifically present the data for your comparisons as percentages for each demographic group (e.g. 25% of males agree that the Loch Ness monster exists, whereas 50% of females agree). While this is not a statistical exercise, you should highlight those results where a 'significant' difference appears to exist among demographic categories, and attempt to offer some explanation for this difference.

Your report is due by **July 24, 2000.**

**Research Project**

Your assignment is to create a website about a Fantastic Archaeology subject, and to lead on-line discussion of this topic at the relevant point in the course. Your website should include an overview of the topic, a discussion of the published literature (with bibliography), and annotated links to other websites.

Please follow the guidelines below. Your grade will be based on the thoroughness of your research; the clarity and organization of the website (i.e. substance, not glitz); adherence to the format guidelines; and your participation in its discussion. A sample student website will be available for you to examine, as are instructions in the use of the webCT tools. It is recommended that you create most of your text using your favorite word processing program, save it in html format, and then 'cut-and-paste' into WebCT when ready.

1. You will choose or be assigned a "fantastic" archaeology topic relevant to this course, and are responsible for preparing your website by the week that topic is listed in the syllabus. You may exchange topics with another student after requesting permission from the instructor (by email). Start by reading the relevant chapter in your text and any related course articles (available online).
2. Write an overview of your topic, including the following information: the "fantastic" discovery or interpretation; the archaeological evidence; other relevant evidence; a critical discussion of the evidence and its interpretation. Your overview should be a minimum of 500 words in length (hyperlinking to separate pages as necessary), and you should cite the sources of the information that you are providing.
3. Create an as complete as possible (i.e. comprehensive, not selected) bibliography of books and journal/magazine articles dealing with your subject (no newspaper articles necessary). You will find some among the references in the textbook and online articles, but you will also need to use the library databases available in WebLuis (e.g. Academic Index, Anthropological Literature). Your bibliography should be neatly presented, single-spaced, in the same format as used in the Federal textbook.
4. Investigate what materials are available on the World Wide Web which deal with this topic. You can start with the sites listed as "Best of the Web" at the end of each chapter in the textbook, and follow through by examining linked sites and searching using various search engines. Links to some websites are provided within the course website. Create a list of links, annotating in a medium-length paragraph the function and content of ten directly relevant web sites. You should specifically include the name and URL of the website, the author or sponsor if identified, and the date published (or visited, if no date is given). Why does this website exist to begin with? You should also describe the site's content: Is it an authoritative or original source of information or just compiling information from other sources? To what audience is the site directed? How is the archaeological topic presented (e.g. is there any bias or selectivity in the information presented, considering what you know is available from your own library research)? Is there any information that seems to be 'new' (i.e. that hasn't been published in a book or article yet)? Are details or data available which can be critically evaluated by the web surfer, or is the site all summary and interpretation ('fantastic' or otherwise) without data to support any conclusion?
5. In about 500 words, compare and contrast the information you found available in books/articles and on the web. Would the average web surfer get a good overview of the archaeological subject, data, and interpretations from the web alone? What recommendations can you suggest to the average web surfer to help him/her research this subject?

6. Upload your text, bibliography, and annotated links to your personal ANT 4149 presentation site, organizing the pages so that the information is easily accessible. Spell-check, grammar-check, and proofread your web pages. Sloppy presentation makes the contents of the website suspect as well. You should have at least a couple of relevant illustrations (you can borrow from other websites); more are welcome but there's no need to make a large gallery of images.

7. You should have at least a nearly-completed version of your presentation by the week your topic is listed in the syllabus. At that time, you should send out an email to students in the course inviting them to visit your site and provide constructive criticism.

8. **All students are required to visit your website the same week, and provide comments and constructive criticism in the appropriate WebCT forum.**

9. You may use peer and instructor feedback to modify your site for up to one week after your initial presentation, at which time it will be examined and graded by the instructor.