FROM INDY TO INDIE
ARCHAEOLOGY IN FILM AND TELEVISION
Anthropology 3822
The George Washington University
Fall 2013

Monday 3:30 -6:00pm HAH #202

Professor: Linda A. Brown
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Office hours: Monday 6:00 – 7:00 pm in HAH 202, or by appointment

Required materials:
1) Textbook
   • Archaeology is a Brand: The Meaning of Archaeology in Contemporary Popular Culture.  

2) Supplementary required readings are posted to the Blackboard website

Course Overview
Indiana Jones is the most recognizable image of an archaeologist in the United States today. Since the 1930's, movies and television shows have depicted diverse images of archaeologists at work. Visual media are largely responsible for the increase in public awareness of archaeology, yet the quest to provide lively entertainment has often resulted in misrepresentations and distortions of archaeological research. Such representations provide fertile ground for examining the relationship between archaeology and popular culture.
In this seminar course, we will critically view films and television episodes featuring archaeology/archaeologists. Visual media will be paired with topical readings from professional archaeological literature. We will begin the semester focusing on fictional films then we will turn our attention to documentaries. Students will be required in class discussions, exams, and a final student project to explore the overlap between “archaeotainment” and various issues - archaeology and colonialism; relations between archaeologists and descendant communities; looters, collectors and archaeologists; archaeology and class relations, among others, as well as demonstrate the ability to think critically about what we view as entertainment.

**Course Objectives**

- To foster critical thinking skills and evaluate archaeological information embedded in popular media – and have fun in the process!

- To explore the impact of popular media on archaeology, both positive and negative. To consider ways that the public perceives archaeology and what those meanings suggest for present and future directions for the archaeological profession.

- To use films as a springboard for the exploration of contemporary and theoretical issues relevant to the practice of archaeology today.

**Viewing Films**

It will **not** be possible to view the films during our limited class period. Thus **YOU MUST VIEW EACH WEEK’S FILMS BEFORE CLASS!** To assist you with this, films will be available for streaming via the class Blackboard site. Watch them before we meet. Our in-class time will be occupied with presentations and discussion of pertinent readings/issues as these articulate with films.

**Evaluation and Grading:**

1. Two exams based on your comprehension of reading materials and your ability to apply these materials to films to demonstrate a critical perspective (worth 20% each): **40%**

2. A final project involving a presentation of a film along with a written analysis (15% each): **30%**

3. Presentation of two different articles/chapters (worth 5% each): **10%**

4. Discussion leader for two classes: (worth 5% each): **10%**

5. Class attendance and participation: **10%**

*Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981)
Exams
You will take two exams during the semester. The exams may involve viewing a film segment that you have not seen in class and applying critical thinking skills to it and/or a short answer section will ask you about issues covered in readings and their application to films viewed. It is your responsibility to keep up with -- and understand -- the key points of all readings. **You will be tested on readings even if we do not discuss them in class!**

Given the potential for using film media in tests, make-up exams will be scheduled ONLY under extreme circumstances and if you have an official college excuse in writing (i.e., sports teams, health services). If you know that you will miss an exam, you must notify me in advance for rescheduling.

Final Student Projects
Each student will write-up and present a short critical analysis of a documentary film chosen from a list of possible films I will select. Additional information about your project will be provided during the semester.

All written components of the final project are **DUE IN CLASS** on the specified due date. Any paper turned in after the due date will be penalized and subjected to grade reductions as described below.

Penalty for Late Project Papers
All project papers are **due in class** on the due date. Late papers will be penalized as follows:

- Papers turned in on the date due yet after class = minus 10% of total points possible for assignment
- Papers turned the day after due date = minus 20% of total points possible for assignment
- Papers turned in 2 days after due date = minus 30% of total points possible.
- For each day late an additional 10% will be subtracted from your score until reaching a score of 0% (ouch!)

Presentation of Required Readings
During the semester, each student will present a summary of a required reading in two different class periods. These presentations will consist of a short synopsis (about 5 minutes) of the reading. This means you need to understand the **key points** of the reading and focus on these for your presentation. Take notes on the reading and use your notes to present the author’s perspective in your own words. I am happy to talk with you if you need assistance.
Discussion Leaders
Each of you, along with at least one other student, will be responsible for leading discussion in two different classes. One of your responsibilities as discussion leader will involve creating discussion questions PRIOR to class. This means you must understand the key points of each article/chapter and have viewed the film so you’ll be ready to ask your fellow students appropriate questions the tie together readings and film. I will post your discussion questions before class (thus you’ll need to get them to me ahead of time) as these will help guide your fellow students when doing the reading. Meet with me before your class and we’ll discuss this in more detail.

Attendance & Participation
As this is a seminar course, attendance and class participation are crucial to your getting a good grade. All students are expected to be in class and actively participate in class discussions in a positive and thoughtful manner. I will note attendance and class participation throughout the semester. Attendance and participation scores will be based on the following:

Full credit – student attended every (or nearly every) class during the semester and actively participated in class by engaging with others in a positive and thoughtful manner.

Half credit – student regularly attended classes and periodically engaged in discussions.

No credit – student did not attend classes regularly or did not participate and/or was disruptive during class.

Plagiarism Policy
Plagiarism is taking someone else’s ideas, words, or work and representing those ideas, words, or works as your own. This includes 1) buying papers on-line, 2) copying another student’s work, and 3) lifting sentences from web pages or printed matter without proper citation. Anyone caught plagiarizing will have the curse of the mummy placed upon them as well as the GWU penalty listed below:

As per the GWU Code of Academic Integrity, the lightest penalty for a first-time plagiarism is failure of the assignment – the lightest penalty for a second time offence is failure of the course
Grading
The standard university system will be used to assign letter grades to score totals as follows:

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IMPORTANT NOTES

• If you cannot take an examine or submit a graded assignment on a particular day due to your religious beliefs, please advise me IN WRITING in the first two weeks of class so we can make alternative arrangements.

• If you have specific physical, psychiatric, or learning challenges please let me know during the first two weeks of class so we can arrange for the appropriate academic accommodations.

• If you decide for any reason not to finish this class, you must drop the course through administrative procedures. If you stop coming to class and do not officially drop the course, I will be forced to fail you in the course (not fun). If you do drop the course, please let me know or I will worry about you.

• I will only grant an Incomplete in this course for incredibly serious reasons (death and/or dire illness) and you will need the appropriate documentation.

*The Mummy (1932)*
Week 1 (26 Aug): Course Introduction

No Class (02 Sept): Labor Day Holiday

Week 2 (09 Sept): Mummies, Colonialism & Curses
Film: *The Mummy* (1932)

**Required Readings in Text or on Blackboard**

**Historic New York Times Reports On Tut’s Curse:**

Week 3 (16 Sept): Shipwrecks, Marine Archaeology, and Booty
Film: *Boy on a Dolphin* (1957)

**Required Readings in Text or on Blackboard**
- Heather Pringle (2007) Profiteers on the High Seas. The big business of treasure hunting is selling off the world's maritime heritage—and it's perfectly legal. *Archaeology* 60(4) July/August.
Week 4 (23 Sept): Archaeologists and Descendant Communities  
Film: *Secret of the Incas* (1954)

**Required Readings in Text or on Blackboard**

Week 5 (30 Sept): The Archaeologist as Late 20th Century Hero  
Film: *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981)

**Required Readings in Text or on Blackboard**

Week 6 (07 Oct): EXAM #1  
Introduction to Archaeology Documentaries on TV

**Required Readings in Text or on Blackboard**
Week 7 – (14 Oct) - Discovery Channel
Blending Genres – Docudramas

**Required Readings in Text or on Blackboard**
- Other readings TBA...

Week 8 (21 Oct): National Geographic Channel
TV Documentary: *Lost Kingdoms of the Maya* (1997)

**Required Readings in Text or on Blackboard**
- Cornelius Holtorf (2007) Chapter 4: What People are Thinking about Archaeology. *Archaeology is a Brand: The Meaning of Archaeology in Contemporary Popular Culture*, pp. 51-61

Week 9 (28 Oct): Discovery Channel
Watch online (ignore the Portuguese subtitles…) at the following:
http://documentaryheaven.com/treasure-quest-black-swan/

**Required Readings in Text or on Blackboard**
- http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2012-06-07/odyssey-and-the-lost-spanish-treasure#p1
Week 10 (04 Nov): History Channel

**Required Readings in Text or on Blackboard**

Week 11 (11 Nov): EXAM 2
Discussion of Student Projects

*Digging for the Truth* (2007)
Week 12 (18 Nov): Student Projects
Required Readings in Text or on Blackboard

Week 13 (25 Nov): Student Projects
Required Readings in Text or on Blackboard

Week 14 - (02 Dec): Student Projects