

## Archaeology and the Celts

ANTH 3891  
Spring 2012

Dr. Susan Johnston  
2020K 14

Textbooks: Cunliffe, Barry. 1997. The Ancient Celts. Penguin Books: London. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. ISBN 0-1402-5422-6

Wells, Peter S. 2001. Beyond Celts, Germans and Scythians. Duckworth: London. ISBN 0-7156-3036-9.

James, Simon. 1999. The Atlantic Celts: Ancient People or Modern Invention? University of Wisconsin Press: Madison, WI. ISBN 0-2991-6674-0

### Reading:

*References in italics are on Blackboard*

January	18	Introduction
	20	Images of the Celts Cunliffe Ch. 1, James Ch. 1
	25	The creation of the Celts Cunliffe Ch. 2, James Ch. 3, <i>Collis Ch. 3</i>
	27	History and its biases <i>Webster 1996; Wells 1999, Ch. 5</i>
February	1	The nature of Classical contact Wells Ch. 4, 6
	3	Documentary sources <i>Collis Ch. 1, 6</i>
	8	The Celts speak <i>Freeman, "Ancient Celts speak", Cunliffe Ch. 2:21-27, Mallory 1989</i>
	10	Archaeology and its biases NO READING
	15	Archaeology and identity Wells Ch. 1
	17	Race and genetics <i>Coon; Forster et al</i>
	22	Genetics and the Celts <i>McEvoy et al, Lisa et al, Zschocke et al, Lucotte and Hazout</i>

	24	Archaeological background to the Celts Cunliffe Ch. 3, Wells Ch. 2
	29	Celtic migrations? Cunliffe Ch. 4, James Ch. 2
March	2	The nature of Celtic warfare Cunliffe Ch. 10, <i>Freeman "War", "Feasting", Hill 1995</i>
	7	<b>MID-TERM EXAM</b>
	9	Celtic religion Cunliffe Ch. 5, <i>Freeman, "Religion", Webster 1995a, 1995b</i>
	14, 16	<b>SPRING BREAK!!!!</b>
	21	Celtic art Cunliffe Ch. 6
	23	Celtic gender <i>Freeman "Women"</i>
	28	Continental Celts Cunliffe Ch. 11, Wells Ch. 3, 5
	30	Atlantic Celts Cunliffe Ch. 8, <i>Freeman "The Western Isles"</i>
April	4	Celts in Iberia Cunliffe Ch. 7
	6	Eastern Celts Cunliffe Ch. 9
	11	The Roman invasion Cunliffe Ch. 12, <i>Wells 1999 Ch. 4</i>
	13	The occupied Celts Cunliffe Ch. 13, Wells Ch. 7, <i>Wells 1999, Ch. 9</i>
	18	Modern Celtic culture James Ch. 1, 4, 5; <i>Bowman; Celtic languages</i>
		<b>PAPER DUE</b>
	20	Modern perceptions of the Celts <i>Hingley and Unwin; Dietler 1994, 1998</i>

25	The Celts and modern politics James Ch. 6; <i>Megaw &amp; Megaw 1996; James 1998; Collis 1997</i>
27	Final thoughts

---

References for Additional Readings:

- Bowman, Marion. 1996. Cardiac Celts: images of the Celts in paganism. In, *Paganism Today*. G. Harvey & C. Hardman (eds.) Thorsons: London.
- Collis, J. 1997. Celtic myths. *Antiquity* 71:195-201.
- Collis, J. 2003. *The Celts: Origins, Myths and Inventions*. Tempus: Stroud.
- Coon, Carleton S. 1939. *The Races of Europe*. Macmillan: New York.
- Dietler, M. 1994. Our ancestors the Gauls. *American Anthropologist* 96:584-605.
- Dietler, M. 1998. A tale of three sites. *World Archaeology* 30:72-89.
- Forster, Peter, Valentino Romano, Francesco Calì, Arne Röhl, and Matthew Hurles. 2004. MtDNA markers for Celtic and Germanic language areas in the British Isles. *Traces of Ancestry*. Martin Jones (ed.) McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research: Cambridge.
- Freeman, Philip. 2008. *War, Women and Druids*. University of Texas Press: Austin.
- Hill, J.D. 1995. How should we understand Iron Age societies and hillforts? A contextual study from southern Britain. In, *Different Iron Ages: Studies on the Iron Age in Temperate Europe*. J.D. Hill and C.G. Cumberpatch (eds.) BAR, Int. Ser. 602. Tempus Reparatum: Oxford.
- Hingley, Richard and Christina Unwin. 2006. *Boudica: Iron Age Warrior Queen*. Hambledon Continuum.
- James, Simon. 1998. Celts, politics and motivation in archaeology. *Antiquity* 72:200-209.
- Lisa, Antonella, Annalisa de Silvestri, Luca Mascaretti, Alberto Degiuli, and Carmela R. Guglielmino. 2007. HLA genes and surnames show a similar genetic structure in Lombardy. *American Journal of Human Biology* 19:311-18.
- Lucotte, Gérard and Serge Hazout. 2004. Geographic and ethnic distributions of the more frequent cystic fibrosis mutations in Europe show that a founder effect is apparent for several mutant alleles. *Human Biology* 67:561-76.
- Mallory, J.P. 1989. *In Search of the Indo-Europeans*. Thames and Hudson: New York.

McEvoy, Brian, Martin Richards, Peter Forster, and Daniel G. Bradley. 2004. The “longue durée of genetic ancestry: multiple genetic marker systems and Celtic origins on the Atlantic façade of Europe. *American Journal of Human Genetics* 75:693-702.

Megaw, JVS and MR Megaw. 1996. Ancient Celts and modern ethnicity. *Antiquity* 70:175-81.

Webster, Jane. 1995a. *Interpretatio*: Roman word power and the Celtic gods. *Britannia* 26:153-61.

Webster, Jane. 1995b. Translation and subjection: *Interpretatio* and the Celtic gods. In, *Different Iron Ages: Studies on the Iron Age in Temperate Europe*. J.D. Hill and C.G. Cumberpatch (eds.) BAR, Int. Ser. 602. Tempus Reparatum: Oxford.

Webster, Jane. 1996. Ethnographic barbarity: colonial discourse and ‘Celtic warrior societies.’ In, *Roman Imperialism: Post-Colonial Perspectives*. J. Webster and N.J. Cooper (eds.). Leicester Archaeology Monographs No. 3: Leicester.

Wells, Peter. 1999. *The Barbarians Speak*. Princeton University Press: Princeton.

Zschocke, Johannes, J.P. Mallory, Hans G. Eiken, and Norman C. Nevin. 1997. Phenylketonuria and the people of Northern Ireland. *Human Genetics* 100:189-94.

## Learning Objectives

- \* to learn something about Iron Age society in Europe, Britain, and Ireland
- \* to think about documents and archaeology and what each can tell us about the past
- \* to challenge assumptions about the interpretation of past identities
- \* to think about how archaeology affects modern society

## Course Requirements:

This syllabus represents the basic framework of this class. However, **I RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CHANGE IT IF IT BECOMES NECESSARY**. This would only happen if we get behind, or want to pursue a topic for more time than I have allowed for that topic. You will get plenty of warning if I do have to change the syllabus.

All of the reading listed in this syllabus is required. You are also responsible for anything which happens in class. It will make this class both more interesting and more useful for you if you will **PLEASE DO THE READING**. That will make it easier for you to enter discussions, which will be numerous in this class.

You must take both exams and turn in the paper in order to pass the course. There are two exams, one during the semester and the other on the date when the final exam is scheduled. Each will cover the section of the course which precedes it; the second exam is not cumulative, except in the most general sense. Each exam is worth 35% of your grade.

**FAILURE TO APPEAR AT AN EXAM WITHOUT LETTING ME KNOW IN ADVANCE, WILL GET YOU AN F ON THAT EXAM.** If you must miss an exam, you will have until I hand back the graded exams to make it up. This is usually about a week. If this becomes necessary, please see me as soon as possible to arrange a time.

There is also a short paper for this course. The paper topic is appended to the syllabus and is intended to be a "thought" paper which asks you to consider some of the ideas about the Celts and archaeology considered in this class. It should be no shorter than 5 pages, and no longer than 10 pages. It will be worth 30% of your grade. It is due **IN CLASS** on **APRIL 18**. **YOU MAY ONLY SUBMIT PAPERS BY E-MAIL IF YOU HAVE MADE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS WITH ME TO DO SO.** I am not a printing service. **Last minute submissions by e-mail without such arrangements will not be accepted.**

My office is Rm. 101 in 2112 G St., and my extension is 4-6075. You can also reach me by e-mail at [sjohnsto@gwu.edu](mailto:sjohnsto@gwu.edu). I will be available in my office on Wednesday and Friday 1:00-3:00, if you need to see me.

## PAPER ASSIGNMENT

The general theme of this course is how we go about identifying “peoples” in the ancient world, and how that impacts modern societies. For the paper, what I would like you to do is to choose a topic which elaborates this theme in some way. Some suggestions are:

- Using a specific example from literature, movies, or other aspects of popular culture, discuss how the Celts are portrayed in modern society. Is this portrayal reasonable? Use evidence from archaeology and ideas about history to evaluate the accuracy of the depiction.
- Take a position on the “Celts or no Celts” question. Should we not use the term at all, use it in a limited way, or use it with reckless abandon? Use specific evidence to show how this would or would not have an impact on the way archaeology is practiced and used in the modern world.
- The Celts are not the only ancient peoples whose interpretation has impacted modern society. Using an archaeologically known group from elsewhere, compare the ways they are depicted or understood to those discussed for the Celts. Are they the same or different, and what are the implications of this comparison?
- How would the interpretation of the European Iron Age be different if the idea of the Celts had never been invented? Using a specific example from archaeology, show how its interpretation is affected by the presence and absence of the concept of the Celts.

These are only some examples. If you can come up with something else in the same spirit, run it past me and we’ll see if it works.

You should be analyzing something specific for this paper, not discussing generalities. You should also be incorporating specific archaeological knowledge into your discussion. Archaeology is about the use of evidence to interpret the past, and this should be reflected in your paper. I also expect you to present original thoughts, and not just simply re-hash class notes—those are my thoughts, not yours!

The paper should be no shorter than five pages, and no longer than ten. And please remember—I was a student once! I know all about large typefaces and large margins. Please give me some credit for intelligence and use a reasonable font and margin size.

A note about references: some portion of this paper will be your own views, but your paper should include the specific analysis of something archaeological. Thus you will need additional sources. Call me old-fashioned, but printed sources are best. However, internet sources are acceptable as long as they are legitimate websites. If you are uncertain about what constitutes “legitimate” in the academic cyber world, send me the URL and I’ll let you know. Just be aware that a lot of, well, crap has been written about the Celts. So use your critical thinking abilities to evaluate any source that you use.

If you want to discuss any details about this paper with me, please come to my office hours. Also, I would be happy to read a draft version of your paper, and make comments on it before you turn the final version in. **Drafts may be emailed to me. If you want to write a draft, please give it to me no later than ten days before the paper is due.**

The final paper is due **April 18, in class.**