

# Interactions with the Dead: Past and Present

ARCH 0310

Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World  
Spring 2018

Instructor: Pinar Durgun

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Class meeting: MWF 2:00-2:50

Office hours: Wed. 3-4 pm., Fri. 12-1 pm, or by appointment

*“The boundaries which divide Life from Death are at best shadowy and vague. Who shall say where the one ends, and where the other begins?”*  
Edgar Allan Poe, *“The Premature Burial”* (1844).



## Course Description

Death is an inevitable, and an inseparable component of life. There are however, certain moments that bring the living closer to the dead. This course aims to look particularly at these moments: How do different cultures and religions react to death and treat dead bodies? How do we commemorate and celebrate death? Who has rights over the dead? What can we learn about the living by studying the dead? To answer these questions we will survey the diversity of interactions with the dead by exploring examples from the ancient and modern world.

## Course Organization

This course focuses on the reactions to death and dying in different cultures, religions, and disciplines as a means to understand human experience with death throughout history. Every week we will focus on a different theme, which will be first presented with archaeological and historical case studies. We will then discuss how these case studies connect to our understanding of that theme in the present by looking at modern case studies. We will also be engaging with local histories: the class will visit Providence's oldest public cemeteries (either North Burial Ground or Swan Point Cemetery), museums, and mortuary monuments in and around Providence. In the classes we will use a broad range of tools and media including objects, journal articles, popular books, and documentary films.

## Learning Objectives

- to understand the relevancy of the past to the present
- to appreciate the diversity of human cultures —past and present—, learn to respect it, and be able to acknowledge commonalities we share as humans
- to critically think about issues, problems, difficulties, and advantages of studying human remains
- to gain an understanding of the theories, events, and social contexts that shaped the our understanding and the study of death and burial
- to gain insight into the variety of mortuary practices in the world and examine what these practices tell us about cultures and societies
- to acquire practical (team work, public speaking), academic (research, analytical thinking) skills

## **Assessment**

The assessments will vary from individual to group work, and from academic to creative assignments to allow students who have different interests, learning preferences and strengths to succeed.

Grading: Letter grade (A, B, C, or NC)

### Assessment breakdown:

#### **Participation and homework: 15%**

You are expected to participate in the class discussions and debates, and are responsible for coming to class having done the readings and the homework assignments.

#### **Weekly blogs: (5% x 10) 50%**

**due: weekly**

You will have the opportunity to reflect on what you have learned by submitting a short text (1-2 paragraphs). These weekly submission have to connect to theme of the week.

#### **Individual research poster: 20%**

**due: March 16**

More and more conferences accept undergraduate poster submissions. The poster assignment is designed to help you practice how to present research in the form of an academic poster, which will hopefully encourage you to submit your research to conferences, and become familiar with your academic communities and conventions at an early stage of your studies. We will have a poster presentation session in Rhode Island Hall mid-semester.

-Poster can be printed at various places on campus (e.g. copy center), or at printing shops. Make sure to plan ahead for this, since it will take a while for posters to be printed. Ask the prices for different printing sizes/qualities at different copy centers since they vary from place to place.

#### **Final group presentation: 15%**

**due: April 23**

The final assignment will allow you to combine what you have learned from the classes with your creative skills. As your final project, you will be assigned to groups, and put together a short documentary film with your group using videos you created throughout the semester. Everyone in the group will receive the same grade. The end product will be a way to start a conversation about the themes of the course with the wider Brown community via a public screening. You are required to come to the practice talks on April 25th and to the public screening on April 27th.

## **Workload**

Weekly readings: 60-100 pages: 4-5 hours

Weekly blog: ~1-2 hours

Over 14 weeks, students will spend 2 hours 30 mins per week in class (35 hours total).

Required reading is expected to take up approximately 4 to 5 hours per week (75 hours). Weekly blog entries will take approximately an hour every week (2 hours some weeks, especially for the interview week), totaling up to 15 hours. In addition, research, poster making, and final project is estimated at total of approximately 60 hours over the course of the term.

## **Readings**

This course will not have a required text book, instead we will read chapters from books and scholarly articles from various journals. All the readings will be posted on the canvas page as pdfs if they are not available online.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Brown University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Students who, by nature of a documented disability, require academic accommodations should contact me. You may also speak with Student and Employee Accessibility Services at 401-863-9588 to discuss the process for requesting accommodations.

(Please inform me a couple of weeks before the field trips if you have any transportation or other accommodation needs.)

## **English Language Learner Syllabus Statement**

Brown University welcomes students from around the world and recognizes the unique perspectives international students bring enrich the campus community. To empower students whose first language is not English, an array of ELL support is available on campus including language and culture workshops and individual appointments. Please do not hesitate to come and talk to me if you have any concerns. For more information about English Language Learning at Brown, you can also contact the ELL Specialists at [ellwriting@brown.edu](mailto:ellwriting@brown.edu).

## **IMPORTANT NOTE**

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, and that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class. I consider the diversity that the students bring to this class as a resource, strength and benefit to the students and to myself as an instructor. Therefore, your criticism and suggestions are always encouraged and appreciated. My aim is to present materials and activities that are respectful of gender identity, sexuality, disability, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Please let me know if there are ways I can improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

Please be aware that classes in this course will require looking at images of human remains, skeletons, and dead people. This is a necessity due to the subject of the course, and I believe that it is important for us to see these images when we talk about death and dying. Nevertheless, I will be extremely careful in choosing images. Please let me know if something shown, said, or done in the classroom, by either myself or other students, is particularly troubling or causes discomfort or offense (this could be about the course content, but it is not limited to that). Given the challenging nature of the material discussed in class, it is important that there is an atmosphere of trust and safety in our classroom, where each class member is able to hear and respect each other. Some of the material in this course may evoke strong emotions, so please be respectful of others' emotions and be mindful of your own. You are always welcome to discuss the situation privately with me, or with the class (chances are there is at least one other student in the class who had a similar response to the material). If you have other concerns or questions, you can always contact me.

## Week 1: Learning from the Dead

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 24

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- Introduction to the course: We will go over the syllabus and discuss the themes, activities, and expectations of this course.

FRIDAY, Jan. 26

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- Death and Popular Culture: What do songs, poetry, literature tell us about our reactions to death? What are some of the most famous art works on death and dying that shaped popular culture and our ideas about death and dying today? What can we learn from these about death and dying?

**READ:**

Durkin, K.F. 2003. "Chapter 5: Death, Dying, and the Dead in Popular Culture" in *Handbook of Death and Dying*, Vol.1, C.D. Bryant (ed.), pp. 43-49. Sage Publications.

Foltyn, L. J. 2008. "Dead famous and dead sexy: Popular culture, forensics, and the rise of the corpse." *Mortality* 13/2: 153-173.

La Ferla, R. 2014. "Flirting With the Dark Side: The Subject of Death Plays a Part in Popular Culture." New York Times web article (October 17, 2014).

[https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/19/fashion/the-subject-of-death-plays-a-part-in-popular-culture.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/19/fashion/the-subject-of-death-plays-a-part-in-popular-culture.html?_r=0)

**BRING:** An art work (painting, song, poem, book, movie, animation, character etc.) that is about death or dying. Be prepared to talk about it.

**THINK:** What do these art works reflect about the way we understand death, interact with death? What are the origins of the ideas or concepts represented?

## Week 2: Learning from the Dead (Part 2)

MONDAY, JAN. 29

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- Religions and Death: How do different religions deal with the idea of afterlife and death? What are the burial practices, funerary ceremonies? How are they similar, in what ways do they differ from each other?

**PICK:** One of the religions (ancient or contemporary) and do the associated reading from this list. (all these readings (except the Maya) are from Obayashi, H. (ed.) 1991. *Death and Afterlife: perspectives of World Religions*. Greenwood Press.

- **AFRICA:** Bond, C.G. “Living with the Spirits: Death and Afterlife in African Religions”
- **ANCIENT EGYPT:** Murnane, W.J. “Taking it With You: The Problem of Death and Afterlife in Ancient Egypt”
- **MESOPOTAMIA:** Cooper, J.S. “The Fate of Mankind: Death and Afterlife in Ancient Mesopotamia”
- **HINDUISM:** Hopkins, T.J. “Hindu Views of Death and Afterlife”
- **BUDDHISM:** Reynolds, F.E. “Death as a Threat, Death as Achievement: Buddhist Perspectives with Particular Reference to the Theravada Tradition”
- **CHINA:** Berling, J.A. “Death and Afterlife in Chinese Religions”
- **MAYA:** “Death and the Afterlife in the Lowlands” in *Death and the Classic Maya Kings* (Fitzsimmons, J. L. 2009. University of Texas Press. Available online through Brown library)
- **ANCIENT GREEK:** North, H. F. “Death and Afterlife in Greek Tragedy and Plato”
- **CHRISTIANITY:** Obayashi, H. “Death and Eternal Life in Christianity”
- **JUDAISM:** Goldenberg, R. “Bound Up in the Bond of Life: Death and Afterlife in Jewish Tradition”
- **ISLAM:** Chittick, W.C. “‘Your Sight Today is Piercing’: The Muslim Understanding of Death and Afterlife”
- **YOUR CHOICE OF RELIGION:** If you want to pick a religion not listed here, come see me for a recommended reading.

**DO:** Read the article, take notes on ways of burying, funerary ceremonies, ideas and attitudes toward death, burial and immortality. Do further online research on parts you do not understand. Bring your questions to class. Be prepared to talk about them in class.

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 31

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- Culture and Death: Are our reactions to death culturally specific? How do cultural ideas and taboos affect our interactions with the dead? What is the American way of dealing with death and dead bodies? How does the funerary industry work in America?

**READ:**

Sayer, D. 2010. “Who's afraid of the dead? Archaeology, modernity and the death taboo.” *World Archaeology* 42/3: 481-491.

Mitford, J. 1998. *The American Way of Death. Revisited*. New York: Vintage Books. (Chapter 6 and 8).

**WATCH:** Behind the scenes: Funeral Home

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=osR1uSnJ854>

**FORM GROUPS (in class):** We will form the groups that you will be working with for your final assignment.

FRIDAY, Feb. 2

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**WATCH:** Documentary Movie: “Death: a Series of Life”, Season 1/Episode 1 (available on Amazon). If you can’t find this watch: “National Geographic Explorer Documentary : Faces of Death” : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNSAqW5C8xk>

**WELCOME GUEST SPEAKER:** Morgan Paar, filmmaker (<https://www.nomadicframes.com/about>). He will give us some tips on filmmaking. We will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of using video and film as a documentary tool.

**SUBMIT:** A blog entry reflecting on the this week’s themes. This could be about something we haven’t discussed in the class, about your reflection on different religions, the documentary, or about what you learned from case studies of this week.

## Week 3: Burying the Dead

MONDAY, Feb. 5

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- Ways of burying: How do we bury our dead? Where do we bury them? Do we always bury them? What are the different types of burial traditions in the ancient and modern world? What are the new technologies and methods for burial today? What are some of the burial terminologies we need to know?

**BRING:** The handout on canvas. Take a look at it before coming to class. What are the terms you know/don’t know? Do online research about the unknown terms, bring it to class.

**DO (in class):** Design your own burial!

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 7

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- Earliest Burials: When did humans start to bury their dead? What is the archaeological evidence for the earliest burials? How can we tell if a burial is accidental or intentional?

**READ:**

Hovers, E. and A. Belfer-Cohen. 2013. “Insights into Early Mortuary Practices of Homo.” *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial*, S. Tarlow and L. Nelson Stutz (eds.), pp. 631-642. Oxford University Press.

Nadel, D. et al. 2013. “Earliest floral grave lining from 13,700–11,700-y-old Natufian burials at Raqefet Cave, Mt. Carmel, Israel.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 110/29: 11774-11778.

optional: Trinkaus, E. 1985. "Cannibalism and Burial at Krapina." *Journal of Human Evolution* 14: 203-216.

- Excavating the dead: How do archaeologists actually excavate burials/cemeteries? What are the methodologies, difficulties and problems with these methodologies?

**READ:**

Parker Pearson, M. 1999. "Excavating human remains" in *Archaeology of Death and Burial*, pp. 198-204. Texas A&M University Press.

FRIDAY, Feb. 9

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- Burial objects: Why are burial objects important? What can we learn from burial objects, what can we not? Why is context important?

**VISIT:** RISD Museum. We will meet there, but you will need to stay there to finish the following assignment:

**DO:** Pick two funerary/burial objects. Fill out the handout for each object, then compare and contrast the two. Be prepared to shortly present your observations in class on Monday.

**SUBMIT:** Instead of the blog post, submit your assignment from RISD Museum in class on Monday.

## Week 4: Preserving the Dead

MONDAY, Feb. 12

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- Preserving the dead: How do human bodies decay? How do different cultures deal with decay and decomposition? What do they do to preserve bodies?

**WELCOME GUEST SPEAKER:** Rachel Kalisher, a graduate student in Archaeology whose research focuses on bioarchaeology. She will be introducing us to stages and elements of human decay and decomposition.

**READ:**

Parker Pearson, M. 1999. "Reading the Body" in *Archaeology of Death and Burial*, pp. 45-71. Texas A&M University Press.

optional: Cantor, N.L. 2010. "Decomposition of the Body and Efforts to Slow Its Disintegration", *After We Die: The Life and Times of the Human Cadaver*, pp. 75-90. Georgetown University Press. (online)

**DO:** Research about the “Body Farm”. What is it, what is its purpose? How can archaeologists benefit from it? (Google image search will result in graphic images, be prepared)

**READ:**

Roach, M. 2003. *Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers*. W. W. Norton & Company.  
 (“Life after Death”)

**LISTEN:** Podcast Criminal: Episode 68, All the Time in the World  
<http://thisiscriminal.com/episode-68-all-the-time-in-the-world/>

- Cremation

**READ:**

Quinn, C.P et al. 2014. “Contextualizing Cremations” in *Transformation by Fire: The Archaeology of Cremation in Cultural Context*, Ian Kuijt et al. (eds.), pp. 1-16. Arizona University Press.

optional: Prendergast, D., J. Hockey, and L. Kellaheer. 2006. “Blowing in the Wind? Identity, Materiality, and the Destinations of Human Ashes.” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 12/4: : 881-898.

optional: Doughty, C. 2015. *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes, and other lessons from the Crematory*. W. W. Norton & Company.

**WATCH:** Ashes To Ashes: Cremation By Water | TIME  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stVvCeVy3Sw>

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 14

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- Mummification and Embalming: We will look at the process of mummification (natural and manmade mummies such as Iceman, Egyptian mummies, Peruvian mummies, bog bodies), and embalming (civil War examples, world leaders and celebrities).

**READ:**

Laderman, G. (2003). “From House Calls to Funeral Homes: Changing Relations Between the Living and the Dead” in *Rest in Peace: A Cultural History of Death and the Funeral Home in Twentieth-Century America*, pp. 1-44. New York: Oxford University Press. (**read only 8-22**)

Ikram, S. and A. Dodson. 1998. “Mummies and the Art of Mummification” in *The Mummy in Ancient Egypt: Equipping the Dead for Eternity*. Thames and Hudson.

optional: Arriola, L.D. 2015. “The Preparation of Corpses and Mummy Bundles in Ychsma Funerary Practices at Armatambo” in *Funerary practices and models in the ancient Andes the return of the living dead*, P. Eeckhout and L.S. Owens (eds.), pp. 186-209. Cambridge University Press. (online)



**WATCH:**

- making your own mummy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1gFY7ST-Tws>

FRIDAY, Feb. 16

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- Victorian funerals, embalming, and Memento Mori: From post-mortem photography to ghost seances, we will look at the unusual elements of Victorian era funerary practices that try to preserve the memory of the dead.

**READ:**

Bown, N. 2009. "Empty hands and precious pictures: post-mortem portrait photographs of children." *Australasian Journal of Victorian Studies* 14 (2): 8-24.

optional:

Bedikian, S. A. 2008. "The Death of Mourning: From Victorian Crepe to the Little Black Dress." *Omega: Journal of Death & Dying*. 2008, Vol. 57 Issue 1: 35-52.

**WATCH:**

- embalming today: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvAtcM4vMuc>

**WELCOME GUEST SPEAKER:** Kathy Hartley from Hearthside House Museum who will be talking about their Victorian funeral exhibit "Gone but not Forgotten".

**SUBMIT:** A blog entry reflecting on the this week's themes. This could be about the funeral industry in America or elsewhere, about interactions or reactions to cadaver in different cultures or religions, or about what you learned from the guest speaker or from case studies of this week.

## Week 5: Living with the Dead

MONDAY, Feb. 19 : **NO CLASS:** President's Day

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WEDNESDAY, Feb. 21

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- Living with the Dead: What are some of the instances where people live with dead bodies, and have to interact with them on daily basis? How does living with the dead affect the attitudes towards death and corpses? How do ancestor cults affect the way we interact with the dead?

**READ:**

Harrington, N. 2013. "Places of Interaction with the Dead" in *Living with the Dead: Ancestor Worship and Mortuary Ritual in Ancient Egypt*, pp. 65-102. Oxbow Books.

Rollefson, G.O. 1983. "Ritual and Ceremony at Neolithic Ain Ghazal (Jordan)." *Paléorient* 9/2: 29-38.

**WATCH:** Torajan people's (Indonesia) ancestor cults and mortuary ceremonies (graphic content)  
<http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/magazine/160311-ngm-indonesian-death-ritual>

FRIDAY, Feb. 23

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**WELCOME:** Guest Speaker Christian Casey, a graduate student in Egyptology who won the best poster award at ARCE (the largest Egyptology conference). Christian will tell us how to design good research posters, and share with us some tips on how to make your posters more engaging.

**[IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO DO AN INTERVIEW FOR YOUR FINAL PROJECT:**

Pick a person from the list (handout). Schedule an interview. Interview them with your group. Make sure to ask them if they want to be filmed or just taped. Prepare questions before you go to the interview that are relevant and informed. Be aware that the scheduling for this may take a while.

**SCHEDULE:** An appointment with me to discuss your poster topic if you haven't done so yet.

**SUBMIT:** A blog entry reflecting on the this week's themes. This could be about intramural burials, ancestors, or about something else you learned from case studies of this week.

## Week 6: Remembering the Dead

MONDAY, Feb. 26

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- How do we remember the dead? What are the material and non-material expressions of remembering? We will look at mortuary monuments (pyramids, tumuli, mausolea, mortuary temples) and at other forms of memorial practices.

**READ:**

Kuijt, I. 2008. "The Regeneration of Life: Neolithic Structures of Symbolic Remembering and Forgetting". *Current Anthropology* 49/2: 171-197.

**WATCH:** Pixar's *Coco*: Philosophy of Death: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7QAVmfFA2g> (in class discuss: Baudrillard, J. Symbolic Exchange and Death [excerpts]).

**DISCUSS:** Memorialization in today's world

**READ:**

Veale, K. 2004. "Online Memorialisation: The Web As A Collective Memorial Landscape For Remembering The Dead." *The Fibreculture Journal* 3.

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Kylie\\_Veale/publication/26397708\\_Online\\_Memorialisation\\_The\\_Web\\_As\\_A\\_Collective\\_Memorial\\_Landscape\\_For\\_Remembering\\_The\\_Dead/links/5848dbef08ae95e1d16662ae.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Kylie_Veale/publication/26397708_Online_Memorialisation_The_Web_As_A_Collective_Memorial_Landscape_For_Remembering_The_Dead/links/5848dbef08ae95e1d16662ae.pdf)

Online Article: What happens to your Facebook when you die?  
<http://time.com/3706807/facebook-death-legacy/>

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 28

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**VISIT:** Anne Mary Brown and H.P. Lovecraft memorials

**FIND:** A memorial on campus or in Providence. Document it (pictures, notes, videos etc.). Do a general research about it. Be prepared to discuss it in class on Friday.

FRIDAY, March 2

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**DISCUSS:** How the 9/11 event, the place, and the people are memorialized in the 9/11 Museum. What were some of the reactions and controversies?

**READ:**

Sturken, M. 2015. "The objects that lived: The 9/11 Museum and material transformation." *Memory Studies* 9/1: 13-26.

<http://journals.sagepub.com.revproxy.brown.edu/doi/full/10.1177/1750698015613970>

Colwell-Chanthaphonh, C. 2011. "The disappeared": power over the dead in the aftermath of 9/11." *Anthropology today* 27/3: 5-11.

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-8322.2011.00806.x/epdf>

**SUBMIT:** A blog entry reflecting on the this week's themes. This could be about the memorial you visited with the class or by yourself, about remembering the dead in different cultures or religions, or in your personal life, or about what you learned from case studies of this week.

## Week 7: Celebrating the Dead

MONDAY, March 5

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- **Funerary Rites and Rituals:** How do funerary practices bring the living and the dead together? How have different cultures formed, continued and changed their funerary practices over time? How does religion affect the way funerals are practiced? We will also look at some of the popular funerary celebrations such as the Day of the Dead, Qingming Festival, Beautiful Feast of the Valley, and of course Halloween.

**READ:**

Van Gennep, A. 2004. "Rites of Passage" in *Death, Mourning, and Burial, a Cross-Cultural Reader*, A.C.G.M. Robben (ed.), pp. 213-223. Blackwell Publishing.

Brandes, S. 2006. "Skulls and Skeletons" in *Skulls to the Living, Bread to the Dead*, pp. 43-66. Blackwell Publishing.

optional: Santino, J. 1983. "Halloween in America: Contemporary Customs and Performances." *Western Folklore* 42/1: 1-20.

**DO:** Research on a funerary festival, holiday, or celebration in an ancient or modern culture. Gather information about the functions and meaning, the objects used, the place where it takes place, about the parts of the ceremony, the clothing, music, and food... Bring the information to the classroom. Be prepared to talk about it. We will try to find commonalities and unique aspects of funerary celebrations across different cultures.

WEDNESDAY, March 7

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- Human and animal sacrifice: What functions does sacrifice serve? How can sacrifice be identified in archaeological record? Can we tell the difference between an ordinary burial and a sacrificial victim, how? What do the sacrificed people or animals can tell us about the ones they were sacrificed for?

**READ:**

Carter, E. 2012. "On Human and Animal Sacrifice in the Late Neolithic at Domuztepe" in A. Porter and G.M. Schwartz (eds.), *Sacred Killing: The Archaeology of Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East*, pp. 97-124. Eisenbrauns, Indiana.

Pennock, C.D. 2008. "Living with Death" in *Bonds of blood : gender, lifecycle and sacrifice in Aztec culture*, pp. 14-40 (excerpts about human sacrifice). Palgrave MacMillan.

web article: "At Ur, Ritual Deaths That Were Anything but Serene" by John Noble Wilford, 2009. [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/27/science/27ur.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/27/science/27ur.html?_r=0)

**FIND and EVALUATE :** A web story or web article on human or animal sacrifice. Read it, be critical. Evaluate it: What is the archaeological/scientific evidence? What are some of the speculations in the article? How would you go about finding a reliable source for these speculations? Or what other evidence would you need? (Video or image search may result in graphic content.) Be prepared to discuss it on Friday.

FRIDAY, March 9

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- Not celebrating the Dead?: What are some different reactions to death and dying? How do different cultures cope with death and grief? How do funerals and memorial services deal with

such reactions? We will talk about the influential work of Kübler-Ross on the “Five Stages of Grief”.

**READ:**

Kübler-Ross, E. et al. 2014. *On grief and grieving: Finding the meaning of grief through the five stages of loss*, pp. 7-28 (Chapter 1). New York: Simon and Schuster.

Laderman, G. 2003. “Explaining the American Funeral 1918-1963” in *Rest in Peace: A Cultural History of Death and the Funeral Home in Twentieth-Century America*, pp. 45-82. New York: Oxford University Press.

**DO:** Write an obituary for yourself. Ask a friend to write one for you. Compare them. What aspects of your life did you/did they highlight? Bring them to class. Be prepared to talk about it in the class.

**SUBMIT:** A blog entry reflecting on the this week’s themes, or come up with a funerary celebration, ritual, event for your own death (what would you want people do at your funeral?)

## Week 8: POSTER PRESENTATIONS

MONDAY, March 12 and WEDNESDAY, March 14: Practice talks and feedback in classroom

FRIDAY, March 16: **Public presentation of the posters.** (Location: tbd)

## Week 9: Places of the Dead

MONDAY, March 19

- Where do we bury the dead? What is the history of cemeteries? How is a cemetery different than a graveyard or a charnel house? What can we learn from cemeteries and their organization?

**READ:**

Rugg, J. 2000. “Defining the place of burial: what makes a cemetery a cemetery?” *Mortality* 5/3: 259-273.

Mack, M. and M. Blakey. 2004. “The New York African Burial Ground Project: Past Biases, Current Dilemmas, and Future Research.” *Historical Archaeology* 38/1: 84-106.

Tarlow, S. "Landscapes of memory: the nineteenth-century garden cemetery." *European Journal of Archaeology* 3.2 (2000): 217-239.

WEDNESDAY, March 21

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- Cemetery visit: We will meet at Swan Point Cemetery (one of the oldest cemeteries in Providence). We will do a tour in the cemetery. Then you will be assigned into groups and work on a given burial plot: you will identify the features, location, surroundings, materials of the burial a grave in your burial plot. Then you will come together as a group and comment on the organization of the graves in your burial plot. You will be given a handout to fill in. But you can also document the burial plot with drawings, photos, videos etc. Prepare a short group presentation of your work to present on Friday.

FRIDAY, March 23

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**DISCUSS:** Cemetery visit observations

**LISTEN:** Podcast 99% Invisible- Episode 258: The Modern Necropolis, which is about the town of Colma in California, where the dead outnumber the living.  
<http://99percentinvisible.org/episode/the-modern-necropolis/>

**SUBMIT:** A blog entry reflecting on the this week's themes. This could be about the cemetery visit, other cemeteries you have visited, or about what you learned from case studies of this week.

## Week 10: HAPPY SPRING BREAK (NO CLASS)

## Week 11: Collecting the Dead

MONDAY, April 2

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- Collecting the Dead: Why do we collect human remains? Can dead bodies become objects? We will survey the history of collecting the dead: human trophies, race collections, "body snatchers", human cadavers for anatomical and other medical purposes, and the Anatomy Act.

**READ:**

Shapland, F. and I. Armit. 2012. "The Useful Dead: Bodies as Objects in Iron Age and Norse Atlantic Scotland." *European Journal of Archaeology* 15/1: 98-116.

Hight, M.J. 2005. "Body Snatching & Grave Robbing: Bodies for Science." *History and Anthropology* 16/4: 415–440.

optional:

Garment, A. et al. 2007. "Let the Dead Teach the Living: The Rise of Body Bequeathal in 20th-Century America." *Academic Medicine* 82/10: 1000-1005.

WEDNESDAY, April 4

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**DISCUSS:** We will question how human remains have been treated in the fields of archaeology and anthropology.

**READ:**

Scarre, G. 2006. "Can Archaeology harm the dead?" in *The Ethics of Archaeology: Philosophical Perspectives on Archaeological Practice*, C. Scarre and G. Scarre (eds.), pp: 181-198. Cambridge University Press.

Fforde, C. 2011. "In Search of Others: The History and Legacy of 'Race' Collections" in *Oxford Handbook of Archaeology of Death and Burial*, S. Tarlow and L. Nilsson Stutz (eds.) pp. 709-732. Oxford University Press.

FRIDAY, April 6

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- Museum visit-TBD (either to a museum with medical collections [Warren Anatomy Museum], or a museum with human remains [RISD]).

**SUBMIT:** A blog entry reflecting on the this week's themes. This could be about human remains and collections, the museum visit, or about what you learned from the class debate, and/or the case studies of this week.

## Week 12: Political Dead

MONDAY, April 9

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- Political conflict, warfare, violence, power, and death: What is the archaeological evidence for warfare, conflict, and violence? How does the death of a political figure affect the living?

**FIND:** An archaeology article on political conflict/violence/warfare and death/human remains. If you can't find anything pick one of the case studies listed below. Take notes on what the archaeological evidence is, and how it is interpreted. Be prepared to talk about it in class.

#### EXAMPLES:

- Andrushko, V. A. et al. 2005. "Bioarchaeological Evidence for Trophy-Taking in Prehistoric Central California." *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 127: 375-384.
- Mitchell, P.D. 2013. "Violence and the crusades: warfare, injuries and torture in the medieval Middle East" in *The Routledge Handbook of the Bioarchaeology of Human Conflict*, M. Smith and C. Knüsel, pp. 251-262. Routledge.
- Tiesler, V. and A. Cucina. 2006. "Procedures in Human Heart Extraction and Ritual Meaning: A Taphonomic Assessment of Anthropogenic Marks in Classic Maya Skeletons." *Latin American Antiquity* 17/4: 493-510.
- Fibiger, L. 2013. "Misplaced childhood? Interpersonal violence and children in Neolithic Europe" in *The Routledge Handbook of the Bioarchaeology of Human Conflict*, M. Smith and C. Knüsel, pp. 127-145. Routledge.

WEDNESDAY, April 11

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- What political power and influence do the dead have over the living (and vice versa)? What happens to the deceased in political cases such as modern military deaths, forensic exhumation, archaeological study, or ancient DNA extraction?

#### READ:

Renshaw, L. "The Exhumation of Civilian Victims of Conflict and Human Rights Abuses: Political, Ethical, and Theoretical Considerations" in *The Oxford Handbook of Archaeology of Death and Burial*, S. Tarlow and L. Nilsson Stutz (eds.), pp.. Oxford University Press.

**DISCUSS (in class):** Death rituals as a political tool: how was it in the past, how is it in the contemporary world? What do the following readings suggest?

Harrington, N. 2013. "Tomb robbery, the desecration of human remains, *damnatio memoriae*, and fear of the deceased: conflicts between the living and the dead" in *Living with the Dead: Ancestor Worship and Mortuary Ritual in Ancient Egypt*, pp.127-131. Oxbow Books.

McClymond, K.T. 2016. "When Ritual Systems Collide: The Execution of Saddam Hussein" in *Ritual Gone Wrong: What We Learn From Ritual Disruption*, pp. 139-172 (**read only 157-172**). Oxford University Press.



FRIDAY, April 13

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**VISIT:** Memorial Park, downtown Providence. How is conflict and war memorialized? What are the themes or concepts that are highlighted? How are the deceased represented? Fill the handout and document the memorial (photos, drawings, videos, etc.).

**SUBMIT:** A blog entry reflecting on the this week's themes. This could be about war and conflict and the relationship between death and power, about the memorial visit, or about what you learned from the class debate, and/or the case studies of this week.

## Week 13: Political Dead (Part 2)

MONDAY, April 16

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- Who owns dead bodies? What is archaeology's role in the ownership of ancient or historical burials?

**READ:**

Aronson, J.D. 2016. "Chapter 8: Who Owns the Dead" in *Who Owns the Dead? The Science and Politics of Death at Ground Zero*, pp. 227-253. Harvard University Press.

Goodnow, K. 2006. "Why and When Do Human Remains Matter: Museum Dilemmas." in *Human Remains and Museum Practice*, J. Lohman and K. Goodnow (eds.), pp. 21-24. UNESCO and the Museum of London Press.

Thomas, D.H. 2000. "Legislating the Skull Wars", in *Skull Wars: Kennewick Man, Archaeology, And The Battle For Native American Identity*, pp. 209-225. Basic Books.

Nilsson Stutz, L. 2013. "Contested Burials: The Dead as Witnesses, Victims, and Tools." in *The Oxford Handbook of Archaeology of Death and Burial*, S. Tarlow and L. Nilsson Stutz (eds.), pp. 801-816. Oxford University Press.

**WATCH:** Documentary about NAGPRA

"Who owns the Past": [http://www.snagfilms.com/films/title/who\\_owns\\_the\\_past](http://www.snagfilms.com/films/title/who_owns_the_past)

Web article: Burial Rights: Who Owns Dead Bodies, Anyway?

<http://www.npr.org/sections/13.7/2013/10/31/241840354/burial-rights-who-owns-dead-bodies-anyway>

WEDNESDAY, April 18

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- Displaying the Dead: Is it ethical to display human remains? How should we display the dead? Should we? What are the different legal, scientific, and academic approaches to these issues?

**READ:**

Alberti, S.J.M.M. et al. 2009. "Should we display the dead?" *Museum and Society* 7/3: 133-149.

**DEBATE:** You will be assigned into groups and will be given a side (the article "Should we display the dead?" has separate sections for Yes/No) and will present a side in a debate.

FRIDAY, April 20

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NO CLASS: Instructor will be at the Annual Meeting of American Research Center in Egypt.

**MEET AND WORK ON:** Your final presentation videos with your group.

**SUBMIT:** A blog entry reflecting on the this week's themes. This could be about some of the museum exhibits we visited in the previous weeks that displayed the dead, or about what you learned from the documentary, class debate, and/or the case studies of this week.

## Week 14: CONCLUSIONS AND FINAL PRESENTATIONS

MONDAY, April 23

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- Conclusions: We will summarize what we have learned throughout the semester. We will reflect on the issues that came up in our discussions. We will evaluate the course and discuss on how to improve it. Ask your questions about the final presentation video.

**SUBMIT:** The final version of your presentations/documentary videos

WEDNESDAY, April 25: **FINAL PRESENTATIONS**

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FRIDAY, April 27: **PUBLIC SCREENING**