

Archaeology 139/239
Archaeology and Disability

Fall 2023, Stanford University

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30am–12pm, Building 500, Room 106



Reconstruction of a disabled *H. heidelbergensis*, Atapuerca, Spain ([source*](#))

Reconstruction of a temple with a ramp, Epidauros, Greece ([source](#))

Objects of personal adornment, Western Washington Hospital for the Insane, USA ([source](#))

Course Description and Outcomes

In this course, we will explore the ways archaeology and disability relate to each other, including both the ways archaeologists interpret disability in the past and how ableism shapes the practice of archaeology in the present. We will examine a variety of theoretical frames drawn from Disability Studies and other disciplines and consider how they can be usefully applied to archaeology. Case studies from a variety of geographic and temporal contexts will provide the basis for imagining an anti-ableist archaeology. By the end of the quarter, students will be able to:

1. Articulate several major ideas from disability studies and apply them to archaeological case studies.
2. Explain how disability studies and disabled self-advocates are reshaping the practice of archaeology.
3. Demonstrate improvement in the research and writing skills that they have chosen to develop through the flexible assignment structure of the course.

Instructor

Dr. Laura Heath-Stout

Pronouns: [she/her/hers](#)

Email: lheathst@stanford.edu

Office: Stanford Archaeology Center (Building 500), Room 214

Drop-In Hours: Tuesdays, 1:30–3:30pm

Make an Appointment: [in person](#) or [via Zoom](#)

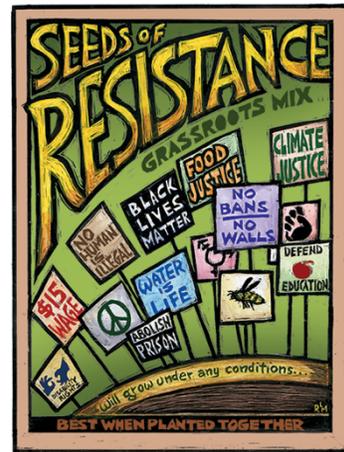


Photo by Rebecca Bianco Hedditch

* This syllabus does not include any images of human remains, but many of the readings do; all readings and links that contain images of human remains are marked with an asterisk.

Course Culture

I am firmly committed to **resisting systemic oppression**. In this class, I will work to promote an environment where everyone is welcome. I recognize that discrimination can be direct or indirect and take place at both institutional and personal levels. I believe that such discrimination is unacceptable, and I am committed to providing equality of opportunity for all by eliminating discrimination, harassment, bullying, or victimization. We all have a responsibility not to participate in or condone harassment or discrimination of any kind. The success of this policy relies on the support and understanding of everyone in this class.



Art by Ricardo Levins Morales



Art by Refi Darrow

I acknowledge the **ongoing COVID-19 pandemic** and the continued emergence of more contagious strains of the coronavirus, which are causing mass death and disablement worldwide. **You are required to wear a mask covering your mouth and nose in class.** Students can pick up masks at Arrillaga Family Dining Commons and Environmental Health & Safety testing locations, during open hours. If you test positive or suspect you may have COVID-19, please follow the [university guidelines](#), **do not attend class**, and get in touch with me to arrange extensions, accommodations, or any other support you need.

Everyone has the right to go by the name and pronouns that they prefer. Not everyone prefers to be called by their legal name, and not everyone's [pronouns](#) are obvious to others. Please introduce yourself by your preferred name and write it on all assignments. If your name or pronouns change during the quarter, please let me know. **Students may call me Laura, Dr. Heath-Stout, or Professor Heath-Stout** and my pronouns are [she, her, and hers](#).



Art by Alina Kotliar

Stanford sits on **the ancestral land of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe**. This land is of great importance to the Ohlone people, and has been since time immemorial. Consistent with our values of community and diversity, we have a responsibility to acknowledge, honor and make visible the university's relationship to Native peoples.

What You Can Expect from Your Instructor

- **I am excited to learn from and with you.** I will treat you with **respect** as my student, a fellow adult, and a fellow human being.
 - I will call you by the name and pronouns that you prefer.
 - I will **intervene** if I witness someone else treating you with disrespect.
 - When I assign upsetting content, I will provide **content warnings** in advance.
 - If I fail to do any of this, I will **apologize** and work to do better in the future.
- **Communication:**
 - I will arrive a few minutes early to class and stay a few minutes after to chat with students most days, as my schedule allows.
 - I will hold **student drop-in hours** on Tuesdays at 1:30–3:30pm in my office (building 500, room 214), and invite you to come talk with me during that time, no appointment necessary.
 - You can **make an appointment** to meet [in person](#) or [via Zoom](#).
 - **Email** is a good way to contact me. Generally, I will **respond to all student emails** within 24 hours (on weekends and holidays, it may take a little longer).
 - I will circulate **anonymous feedback surveys** to students twice during the quarter. You can also send me anonymous feedback [here](#).
- I will **return graded assignments** to you within two weeks. I will provide both confirmation of the credits you have earned (see below) and qualitative feedback on your work.
- I will make **all course materials available for free** via our Canvas page and/or library.
- **If there is something I can do to create a more comfortable learning environment for you**, please never hesitate to ask, even if you're not registered with the [Office of Accessible Education](#). (For example, “can you speak more slowly/loudly/clearly?” or “can you make the image brighter/more high-contrast?”) Students who want transcripts for audiovisual material should let me know as soon as possible so that I can make or acquire them. I will hold such conversations in strict confidence.
- If I am worried about your **well-being** based on something you say or do, or because you have stopped attending class, submitting assignments, or responding to communications from me, I will reach out to check in with you. I will connect you with any resources or supports that I know of that are relevant to your situation. I may also get in touch with your advisor so that they can support you, or ask my department administrator to contact your R.A. to do a wellness check; I will let you know if I have done so. I am a **mandated reporter**, so if you tell me about harassment or violence within the Stanford community, I am legally required to report it to the university. However, I am happy to connect you with other staff whom you can talk to without triggering a report: just ask!



ComplianceSigns.com

How Your Work Will Be Assessed: Labor-Based Grading

In this course, we will build a scholarly community and will learn together about disability issues in archaeology through reading, writing, creating, discussing, and listening. By the end of the quarter, we will all have a better understanding of these topics. Unfortunately, I'm required by the university to assign you a grade at the end of the quarter. A variety of education research (much of it summarized and cited in the book [Ungrading edited by Susan D. Blum](#)) shows that the grading process creates anxiety and power imbalances that undermine student learning.



So, this quarter we will be using a system of **labor-based contract grading** (inspired by the work of pedagogy scholars [Asao Inoue](#) and [Cathy Davidson](#)). Below, you will find a menu of ways to engage with our course, each worth a specific number of credits. You will create your own plan for how many and which assignments to complete, and when. **If you complete those assignments on time (according to the deadline you set), you'll get the full listed number of credits**, along with qualitative feedback from me. You get to decide what grade to aim for, and how to engage with our topic in order to get that grade.

Assignment Menu Overview

(see Assignment Menu document for instructions for each assignment)

Assignment	Credits
<i>Required Assignments:</i>	
Quarter Plan (due 10/3, 5pm)	10
Prepare for, Attend, & Participate in Class	1 per class/20 total
Quarter Reflection (due 12/12, 5pm)	10
<i>Student's Choice Assignments:</i>	
Research Paper	30
Conference-Style Research Presentation	25
Conference-Style Poster	20
Annotated Bibliography	15
Write a Section Related to Disability for a Larger Scholarly Project	15
Interview a Disabled Archaeologist	15
SAPIENS-Style Article	15
Peer Review a Draft of a Classmate's Project	10
Peer Review a Publication	10
Revise an Assignment after Getting Feedback	10
Lead Class	10
Design Your Own Project	student's choice

Grading Policies

- Required Assignments:** All students are required to submit a Quarter Plan at the beginning of the quarter and a Quarter Reflection at the end of the quarter. They are also required to either attend and participate in each class session or make up for missing it by writing a reflection on the readings. **Other than these assignments, students get to choose which work they will complete and when.**
- Late Assignments**
 - Students will set their own deadlines for most assignments; you are encouraged to schedule them in a way that makes sense with your other commitments this quarter.
 - All students begin the quarter with a **time bank** of 72 hours of no-questions-asked, no-permission-needed extension that can be used to turn assignments in late. Your time bank can be used on any assignment or combination of assignments. I will track your time bank balance and deductions (rounded to the nearest quarter-hour) as a “grade” in Canvas, but it will not affect your grade in any way.
 - If you need a further **extension**, please get in touch at least 24 hours before an assignment is due. I would rather give you an extension and give you time to do your best work than receive work you aren’t proud to submit.
 - Once the time bank is depleted and in the absence of a granted extension, an assignment turned in **late** will lose $\frac{1}{2}$ credit per day late (partial days will be rounded up).
- Final Grades** will be calculated by totaling earned credits and rounding to the nearest whole credit, then letter grades will be assigned using this table:



Credits	Grade	Credits	Grade
≥97	A+	77–79	C+
93–96	A	73–76	C
90–92	A-	70–72	C-
87–89	B+	67–69	D+
83–86	B	63–66	D
80–82	B-	60–62	D-
		<60	NP

Unit 1: Introductions

Week 1: Week of September 25

Tuesday, 9/26: Introduction to the Course and Each Other

Thursday, 9/28: What is Disability? What is Disability Studies?

- “Disability” by Rachel Adams et al. (7 pp.; [link](#))
- “History” by Susan Burch and Kim E. Nielsen (4 pp.; [link](#))
- “Society for Disability Studies Principles” by the Society for Disability Studies (1 p.; [link](#))
- “Critical Disability Studies” by Rosemarie Garland-Thompson (9 pp.; [link](#))



Week 2: Week of October 2

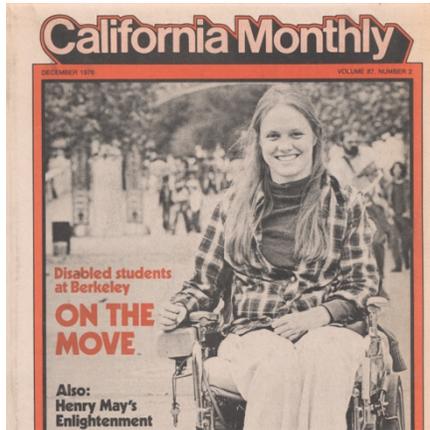
Tuesday, 10/3: What is Archaeology?

- *Archaeology as History: Telling Stories from a Fragmented Past* by Catherine Frieman (106 pp.; [link](#))
- Quarter Plan due 5pm

Thursday, 10/5: “Seeing” Disability in the Archaeological Record



- “Accessing the Inaccessible” by Morag Cross (15 pp.; on Canvas)
- “Understanding the Social Model of Disability” by Colin Barnes (18 pp.; [link](#))
- “My Body Doesn’t Oppress Me, Society Does” by Patty Berne and Stacey Milbern (5:08 video; [link](#))
- “The Architecture of Access” by Debby Sneed (15 pp.; [link](#))
- “Past Perspectives” by William Southwell-Wright (28 pp.; [link](#))



Week 3: Week of October 9

Tuesday, 10/10: Patient No More (no regular class meeting)

- Virtual Tour of “Patient No More” Exhibit ([link](#))
- Participate in Canvas Discussion Forum

Thursday, 10/12: Workshop with Sins Invalid (on Zoom!)

- Readings TBA

Unit 2: Bioarchaeology

Week 4: Week of October 16

Tuesday, 10/17: Bioarchaeology and the Medical Model

- “Medicalization” by Sayantani DasGupta (2 pp.; [link](#))
- “Hidden or Overlooked?” by Tony Waldron (16 pp.; on Canvas)*
- “The Bioarchaeology of Disability” by Solange Bohling et al. (18 pp.; [link](#))*
- “Beyond Mortality” by Heather Battles and Rebecca Gilmour (18 pp.; [link](#))

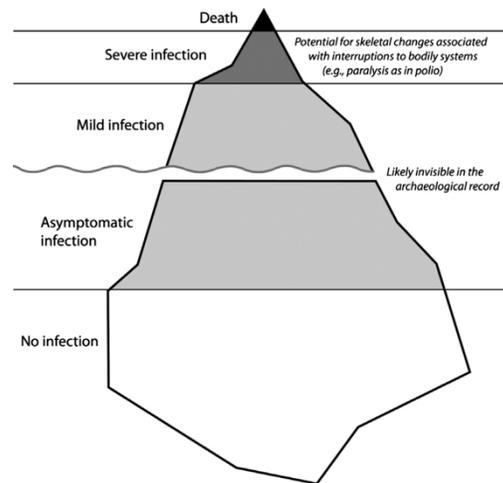


Figure 1 from Battles and Gilmour

Thursday, 10/19: Bioarchaeology and the Social Model

- Excerpts from *Bioarchaeology of Impairment and Disability* edited by Jennifer F. Byrnes and Jennifer L. Muller ([link](#))*:
 - “Mind the Gap” by Jennifer F. Byrnes and Jennifer L. Muller (15 pp.)
 - “Accommodating Critical Disability Studies in Bioarchaeology” by Russell Shuttleworth and Helen Meekosha (20 pp.)
 - Two other chapters of your choice

Week 5: Week of October 23

Tuesday, 10/24: Disability in the Palaeolithic

- “Dependency” by Eva Feder Kittay (5 pp.; [link](#))
- “The Palaeolithic Compassion Debate” by Nick Thorpe (18 pp.; [link](#))
- “Setting the Scene for an Evolutionary Approach to Care in Prehistory” by David Doat (14 pp.; [link](#))
- “Calculated or Caring?” by Penny Spikins et al. (20 pp.; [link](#))*



Figure 4 from Spikins et al.; photo by Joseph V

Thursday, 10/26: The Bioarchaeology of Care

- “Care Webs” by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (37 pp.; [link](#))
- Excerpts from *Theory and Practice in the Bioarchaeology of Care* by Lorna Tilley ([link](#)):*
 - “Introducing the Bioarchaeology of Care” (11 pp.)
 - “Agency, Identity, and the Bioarchaeology of Care” (25 pp.)
 - “Survival with Severe Disability” (27 pp.)

Unit 3: Institutions

Week 6: Week of October 30

Tuesday, 10/31: Hansen’s Disease Colonies

- “Medieval Leper Hospitals in England” by Simon Roffey (32 pp.; [link](#))*
- “Diagnostic Medievalism” by Jessica Chace (~10,000 words; [link](#))
- “An Institution that was a Village” by James Flexner (28 pp.; [link](#))
- “Disability, Human Rights, and the Public Gaze” by Chia-Li Chen (12 pp.; [link](#))



Figure 7 from Allmond

Thursday, 11/2: Asylums

- “Institutions” by Licia Carlson (4 pp.; [link](#))
- “Light & Darkness in an Edwardian Institution for the Insane Poor” by Gillian Allmond (22 pp.; [link](#))
- “Madness and the Material Environment” by Peta Longhurst (18 pp.; [link](#))
- ““All the Aids that Nature Can Afford”” by Linnea Kuglitsch (18 pp.; [link](#))

Week 7: Week of November 6

Tuesday, 11/7: No Class, Democracy Day (U.S. citizens, don't forget to vote!)

Thursday, 11/9: Eugenics

- “Eugenics” by Rosemarie Garland-Thompson (6 pp.; [link](#))
- ““A Long Waiting for Death”” by Shawn M. Phillips (16 pp.; [link](#))*
- ““Care and Maintenance”” by Sarah Whitt (~8,000 words; [link](#))
- “Race, Apology, and Public Memory at Maryland’s Hospital for the ‘Negro’ Insane” by Zosha Stuckey (~8,000 words; [link](#))



OnlyInYourState.com

Week 8: Week of November 13



Figure 3 from Camp

Tuesday, 11/14: Disability at Non-Disability-Specific Institutions

- “The Materiality of Institutional Life” by Eleanor Conlin Casella and Linnea Kuglitsch (25 pp.; [link](#))
- “Vision and Ocular Health at a World War II Internment Camp” by Stacey Camp (17 pp.; [link](#))
- “Reconsidering Confinement” by Chris Chapman et al. (22 pp.; on Canvas)
- “Introduction” by Liat Ben-Moshe (36 pp.; [link](#))

Thursday, 11/16: Black Disability Politics

- “Race” by Nirmala Erevelles (4 pp.; [link](#))
- “Black Disability Politics in Black Military Service” by Katherine Kinkopf and Laurie A. Wilkie (23 pp.; [link](#))
- ““Not Unmindful of the Unfortunate”” by Richard F. Veit et al. (30 pp.; [link](#))
- Excerpts from *Black Disability Politics* by Sami Schalk
 - “Introduction” (22 pp.; [link](#))
 - “Fighting Psychiatric Abuse” (21 pp.; [link](#))

Unit 4: Disabled Archaeologists

Week 9: Week of November 27

Tuesday, 11/28: Disabled Archaeologists



- “The Engendering of Archaeology” by Alison Wylie (20 pp.; [link](#))
- *Enabled Archaeology* by Theresa O’Mahony (15 pp.; [link](#))
- “Mission Statement” by the Disabled Archaeologists Network (1 p.; [link](#))
- “Imagining Archaeologies Without Ableism” by Laurie A. Wilkie (25 pp.; [link](#))
- “Introduction” by Jay Timothy Dolmage (40 pp.; [link](#))

Thursday, 11/30: Disabled Archaeologists, continued

- “Digging While Impaired” by Debby Sneed and Mason Shrader (30 pp.; on Canvas)
- “The Invisibly Disabled Archaeologist” by Laura E. Heath-Stout (16 pp.; [link](#))
- “American Veterans Archaeological Recovery” by Treva Waters-Barham and Stephen Humphreys (12 pp.; [link](#))
- “Heritage for All” by Kornelia Kajda et al. (25 pp.; [link](#))

Week 10: Week of December 4

Tuesday, 12/5: Disability Expertise

- “Disability Expertise” by Cassandra Hartblay (11 pp.; [link](#))
- “Confronting Ableism in Archaeology with Disability Expertise” by Laura E. Heath-Stout et al. (5 pp.; [link](#))
- “Disability and Bioarchaeology” by Mason Shrader (8:10 video; [link](#))
- ““A lame man can ride... a deaf man can kill... a dead man is of no use to Anyone”” by Timothy E. Jones (6 pp.; [link](#))
- “Exploring Multiple Roles and Allegiances in Ethnographic Process in Disability Culture” by Russell Shuttleworth (10 pp.; [link](#))

Thursday, 12/7: TBA

Exam Period: December 11–15

- Quarter Reflection due Tuesday, 12/12, 5pm