

# ARCHAEOLOGY OF WAR

## Anthropology 515L

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**Spring Semester, 2006**  
**9-11:30 F, 113 Davenport Hall**

This seminar examines archaeological perspectives on war and draws on a wide range of case studies from prehistoric village raids to the Little Big Horn, the Battle of the Somme, and the recent invasion of Iraq. We will consider the contributions and objectives of conflict archaeology, battlefield archaeology, and forensic archaeology, and evaluate archaeology's potential contributions to the understanding and interpretation of human conflicts that transcend the level of individual violence. Final grades will be based on a term paper, in-class presentations, and active informed participation in seminar discussions. Conditions permitting, we may also take a long weekend and visit, French, English, Native American, and American military archaeological sites in the Midwest.

The assigned texts will be a set of articles downloadable as pdfs and the following books:

Keeley, Lawrence H. (1996) *War Before Civilization: The Myth of the Peaceful Savage*. Oxford University Press, New York.

Otterbein, Keith F. (2004) *How War Began*. Texas A&M Press, College Station, TX.

Fox, Richard A. (1997) *Archaeology, History, and Custer's Last Battle: The Little Big Horn Reexamined*. University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, OK.

Juhl, Kirsten (2005) *The Contribution of (Forensic) Archaeologists to Human Rights Investigations of Mass Graves*. AmS-NETT 5. Museum of Archaeology, Stavanger, Norway. A free download at [http://www.ark.museum.no/AmS-NETT/Mass\\_Graves.pdf](http://www.ark.museum.no/AmS-NETT/Mass_Graves.pdf)

### Tentative Course Outline

- Causes and contexts of war: the archaeology of war and the conflicts of values
- Military landscapes (e.g., battlefields, POW camps, lines of advance and retreat, barracks, supply dumps, mass graves)
- Arms and their archaeologically identifiable effects
- Fortification: how to tell a fort from a drainage ditch
- Tactics: reconstructing from archaeological evidence
- Heritage management of military sites
- Case studies:
  - Battlefield archaeology: the Little Big Horn and the Somme
  - Forensic archaeology: mass graves & military aircraft crash sites