

Fall 2015

ANTH 1020

Ryan Gray
University of New Orleans

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ANTH 1020-001
FADS AND FALLACIES IN HUMAN ORIGINS AND ARCHAEOLOGY
D. RYAN GRAY
MWF, 10-10:50

Classroom: 165 Milneburg

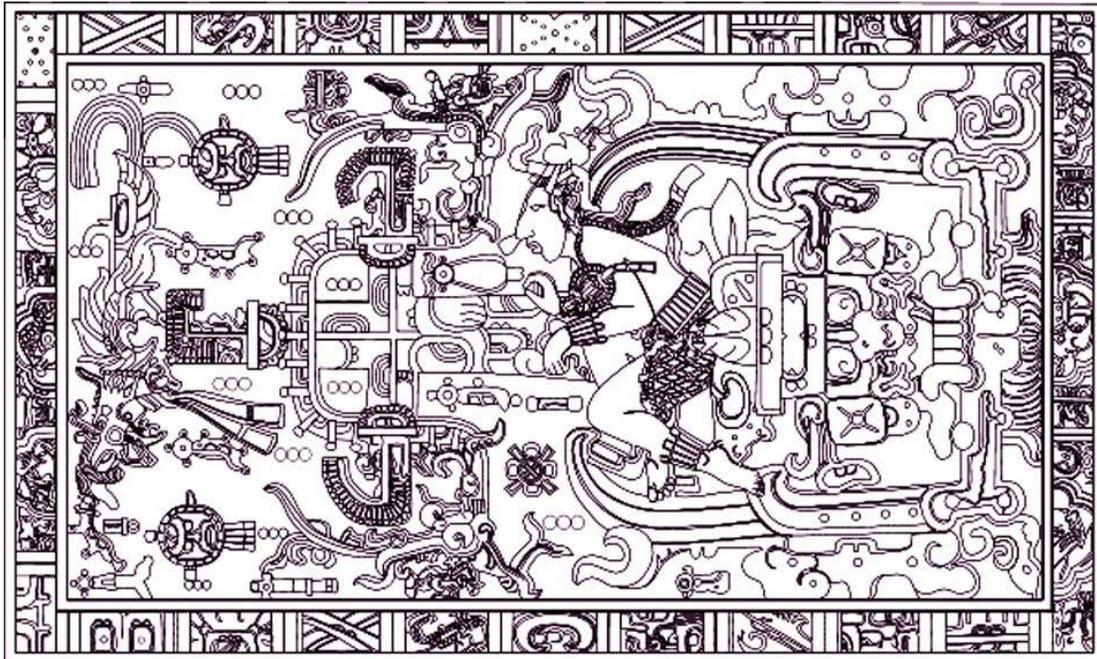
Office: 335 Milneburg

Office Hours: Tuesday, 10-4; Wednesday, 12-2; Friday, 12-4

Note: Some office hours will be held in 272 Liberal Arts (Archaeology Lab)

Phone: 504-280-1072

Email: drgray1@uno.edu



COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Pseudoscientific 'theories' on supposed mysteries in the ancient and modern worlds have found increased audiences through both the Internet and through other forms of mass media. This course examines such theories with particular reference to the use and misuse of archaeological data to promote sensationalist agendas. Topics will include ancient astronauts and alien technologies, lost continents and races, the 'first' Americans, pyramids, cryptozoology (including Bigfoot, the chupacabra, and assorted sea monsters), Fortean and 'unnatural' natural phenomena, ancient astronomy, conspiracy theories, archaeology and the occult, archaeology and the Bible, doomsdays and catastrophes, and more. The course will also focus upon differentiating scientific theories from unsupported assertions and logical fallacies and examine the underlying motives behind the proliferation of 'fringe' science, particularly when it is used to promote racist and ethnocentric positions in the present.

Course Objectives:

When you leave this class you will be able to:

- recognize fallacies in logical arguments that utilize archaeological evidence.
- list and explain the most common pseudo-scientific assertions that are made about human history.
- analyze the content and coherence of explanations for human behaviors in prehistory.
- evaluate the motives and implications [the historical situatedness] of differing interpretations of the past.
- identify underlying political or ideological claims in data that is presented as objective.
- compose systematic critiques of logically flawed arguments and differentiate scientific theories from those based upon unverifiable claims.

Class Texts:

There are two texts for this class:

Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries: Science and Pseudoscience in Archaeology, 8th edition by Kenneth Feder (McGraw Hill Higher Education Publishing; ISBN-13: 978-0078035074). Please note that there are earlier editions of this work widely available through on-line stores. Although I have no objection to you using a slightly earlier edition (e.g., the 6th and 7th, available on-line for substantially cheaper), *YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE* for any differences in page numbers or content.

Critical Engagements with Fringe Science, 1st Edition, ed. by D. Ryan Gray (Cognella Academic Publishing; ISBN: 978-1634873055). This is a reader that I edited that takes a somewhat different perspective than the Feder book. It is available in one of three ways: it can be ordered according to the instructions below; it can be purchased in a 'binder-ready' version in the bookstore, or it may be accessed on reserve in the UNO library. Please note that there is a scanner available on the first floor of the library for free!

Ordering Instructions: *Critical Engagements with Fringe Science (First Edition)*, is published and distributed by Cognella, Inc. The book is now available for purchase in both print and digital formats through their student e-commerce store (<https://students.universityreaders.com/store/>), Print Price: \$110.95; Digital Price: \$99.95. If you buy this textbook directly from the publisher. This will ensure you receive the following benefits:

- Best price available. The publisher offers a 20% discount off of the book's list price and there are no third-party price markups applied.
- Most updated edition. Only the current, most recent edition is available, unlike other vendors who may carry older editions.
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To purchase the textbook, please follow the instructions below: Step 1: Log on to <https://students.universityreaders.com/store/>. Step 2: Create an account or log in if you have an existing account to purchase. Step 3: Easy-to-follow instructions guide you through the rest of the ordering process. Step 4: After purchasing, you can access your full or partial e-book by logging into your account and clicking My Digital Materials to get started on your readings right away. Orders are typically processed within 24 hours and the shipping time will depend on the selected shipping method and day it is shipped (orders are not shipped on Sundays or holidays). If you experience any difficulties, please email orders@cognella.com or call 800.200.3908 ext. 503.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance will be kept and is figured into your attendance grade. You are allowed two excused absences that will not affect your grade. After those two absences, your attendance grade will be computed directly based upon the number of class sessions you were in class. Thus, for example, if you were present in 32 out of 40 classes, your attendance grade would be 85 [$32+2$ excused= $34/40=85\%$].

After the semester has started, attendance will be taken with a sign-in sheet. If you arrive at class late or otherwise miss the opportunity to sign the sheet, **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SIGNING IN AT THE END OF CLASS**. Your attendance must be recorded for you to receive credit!

In extenuating circumstances, at the discretion of the instructor, students may be allowed to do writing assignments to make up for absences.

Grading and Structure of Course:

Grading is on a ten-point scale (89.5+ = A; 80-89.5 = B; 70-79.5 = C; 60-69.5 = D; 0-59.5 = F). Test scores are not on a curve. Make-ups for midterm or final exams are not possible without extenuating circumstances. If you are caught cheating, you will receive an "F" for the course.

This course is intended primarily as a lecture course. However, this course will utilize multiple media (video, internet, and recordings), discussion, surveys, and activities inside and outside the classroom. When appropriate, I expect you to engage with the material and participate in the class. You cannot do this if you are absent, so attendance is a vital part of your class grade.

Grades will be determined as follows:

Attendance and Participation (including Discussion Forum postings): 10%

Quiz and/or Take-Home Assignments: 10% each, 40% total

Midterm: 20%

Final: 30%

Discussion Forum:

Opportunities for questions and classroom discussion will be offered in the course of regular classes, and your engagement in class will be considered in your participation/attendance grade. However, in a class of this size, it is not always possible to hear from everyone (and, for that matter, not everyone likes speaking in front of large groups!). Therefore, I have started a discussion forum on Moodle in case anyone wants to post comments, questions, or links to websites, videos, and/or articles that appear in the media. **YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO MAKE AT LEAST TWO SUBSTANTIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DISCUSSION FORUM DURING THE SEMESTER**. These will be part of your participation grade for the class.

Please note that I intend for the forum to be civil in tone, and I will moderate it accordingly. Respect the opinions of others, look for productive ways to engage if you respond to someone else's post, and, if you disagree strongly, give them the benefit of the doubt. Many of the issues that we will address in the course of the class are the subject of deeply held beliefs: please be sensitive to that!

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Students who qualify for services will receive the academic modifications to which they are entitled, and the instructor will make every effort to accommodate any other special needs. It is

the responsibility of the student to register with the Office of Disability Services (UC 260) each semester and follow their procedures for obtaining assistance.

Communications Policy and Moodle:

It is the student's responsibility to obtain access information (username and password) for a UNO email account. To simplify matters in communication I will use only the email address that is registered to you on Moodle. The Computer Help Desk personnel (280-HELP) can help you set your UNO email system up to forward mail to you if you do not want to access your UNO account regularly.

Moodle will be used for posting PDFs of readings, for class announcements, and for posting links to electronic resources. **YOU WILL NEED IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO MOODLE FOR CLASS READINGS AND WEB LINKS!**

Classroom Rules and Conduct:

Please arrive in class on time. All cell phones should be turned off before class; there should be no texting during class. Laptops are allowed in class, but during class I expect them to be used for taking notes and for reading documents only. If you violate this policy, you will be asked to leave the classroom, and you will not receive credit for attendance.

Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the UNO Judicial Code for further information. The Code is available online at <http://www.uno.edu/studentaffairs/sa-docs/studentcodeofconduct.pdf>.

Cases of cheating will be taken to the university honor council for possible expulsion from the University. You will receive an F for any test you are caught cheating on and your academic record will be documented accordingly (see <http://www.uno.edu/studentaffairs/sa-docs/academicdishonestypolicy.pdf>). I fully expect everyone in the class to uphold the University honor code with regards to academic honesty.

Students are expected to treat their fellow students with civility, tolerance, and respect, and classroom discussions should be conducted in such a fashion. No harassment, sexual or otherwise, will be tolerated.

For further clarification of university policies governing student conduct, see: <http://www.uno.edu/studentaffairs/student-policies/>

STRUCTURE OF CLASS

Below is an outline syllabus for topics that we will be covering in class. I may adjust this schedule and/or the readings based upon your own background and interests. Please pay attention to Moodle for the most updated information and announcements about class materials!

WEEK 1 (AUGUST 19th & 21st)

INTRODUCTION: DOCUFICTIONS AND INFOTAINMENT

Readings: Gray Reader Chapter 1 (Introduction)

WEEK 2 (AUGUST 24th, 26th, & 28th)

EPISTEMOLOGY, SCIENCE, AND WORLDVIEW

Readings: Feder, Chapter 1-2; Gray Reader Chapter 2

WEEK 3 (AUGUST 31st, SEPTEMBER 2nd & 4th)

PRODUCING ARCHAEOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE: CONTEXT AND PROVENIENCE

Readings: Gray Reader, Chapters 4; Feder Chapter 3

'Ancient Aliens' Writing Assignment

WEEK 4 (NO CLASS ON SEPT. 7th; SEPT. 9th & 11th)

PRODUCING ARCHAEOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE: CHRONOLOGY AND TIME

Readings: Gray Reader Chapter 5

Feder Chapter 4 is Optional

First Assignment Due

WEEK 5 (SEPTEMBER 14th, 16th, and 18th)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTROVERSIES: WHO 'DISCOVERED' AMERICA?

Readings: Feder Chapter 5 & 6

WEEK 6 (SEPTEMBER 21st, 23rd, and 25th)

LOST CONTINENTS AND VANISHED 'RACES'

Readings: Feder, Chapter 7 & 8

Extras: Churchward, *The Lost Continent of Mu* (available as PDF) and Ignatius Donnelly, *Atlantis: The Antediluvian World*, available through Moodle

Quiz on Kennewick Man and the 'First Americans'

WEEK 7 (SEPTEMBER 28th, 30th, and OCT. 2nd)

THINKING ABOUT DIFFUSION, INVENTION, AND TECHNOLOGY

Reading: Gray Reader Chapter 6, Feder Chapter 10

WEEK 8 (OCTOBER 5th, 7th, and 9th)

MIDTERM WEEK

**WEEK 9 (OCTOBER 12th & 14th, MID-SEMESTER BREAK ON OCT. 15 & 16)
RETURN OF THE ANCIENT ALIENS: 'UFOLOGY', THE PARANORMAL, AND SCIENCE
Readings: Gray Reader Chapter 7**

**WEEK 10 (OCTOBER 19th, 21st, and 23rd)
ANCIENT ALIEN NARRATIVES: GENEALOGIES
Readings: Feder, Chapter 9, Gray Reader Chapter 8**

**WEEK 11 (OCTOBER 26th, 28th, and 30th)
CRYPTOZOOLOGY! BIGFOOT, NESSIE, YETI, AND MORE
Readings: Gray Reader, Chapter 9**

**WEEK 12 (NOVEMBER 2nd, 4th, and 6th)
MONSTERS, MYTHOLOGIES, AND LEGENDS
Readings: Feder, Chapter 12, and Gray Reader, Chapter 10
Quiz 2**

**WEEK 13 (NOVEMBER 9th, 11th, and 13th)
CATASTROPHISM, DOOMSDAY(S), AND TIME IN THE ANCIENT WORLD
Readings: Feder, Chapter 13; Review Gray Reader, Chapter 6**

**WEEK 14 (NOVEMBER 16th, 18th, and 20th)
CONSPIRACIES!
Readings: Gray Reader, Chapter 11
Conspiracy Assignment**

**WEEK 15 (NOVEMBER 23rd and 25th; Thanksgiving Holiday on Nov. 26th and 27th)
CONSPIRACIES (Cont.)
Make-Up Quiz; Conspiracy Assignment Due**

**WEEK 16 (NOVEMBER 30th, DECEMBER 2nd & 4th)
USING AND ABUSING THE PAST
Readings: Review Gray Reader, Chapter 2**

FINAL EXAM: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11TH, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.