

FALL 2012

## Bioanthropology Journal Club (ANG 6905)

Time/Place: Tuesdays, 5:10 - 6:00 – 101 Cantina (1632 West University Avenue) \* in the back patio area.

Instructor: John Krigbaum, Ph.D.

Facilitator: James D. Pampush (jpampush@ufl.edu)

Website: lss.at.ufl.edu (e-Learning)

Schedule:

4 Sept. Pampush	2 Oct.	6 Nov.
11	9	13
18	16	20
25	23	27
	30	4 Dec.

The Bioanthropology Journal Club (BJC) will meet every Tuesday to discuss recently published (two year window) peer-reviewed papers in biological anthropology. Class meetings will be held in an informal discussion-style with a single paper discussed each week. This semester there will be no powerpoint or formal presentation. Participants will be expected to have (1) read the article and (2) contribute to discussion, with the lead participant ('moderator') of the week taking the lead.

There is no strict theme this semester, but please focus on topics pertaining to biological anthropology. Though each week represents a new paper and potentially a new topic, in our final meeting, participants will gather to synthesize topics/papers reviewed and reassess current research and publishing trends in the field. Class participation consists of contributing to the discussion each week and—at least once in the semester—choosing an article and serving as lead participant/moderator for a paper.

Articles should be thoughtfully chosen and of reasonable length ( $\leq 10$  pages). Review papers are inappropriate, and as mentioned, papers should not be older than two years. Each participant will provide their article one week prior to their presentation in .pdf format to the BJC Facilitator (JD Pampush) so that he can upload the paper to the Sakai website Resources folder. Details each week will be posted in the Calendar and Resources folder in e-Learning (<https://lss.at.ufl.edu>).

Each lead participant should have several talking points around which to structure the discussion of their chosen paper. These points can be posted on the website for consideration by the rest of the class prior discussion, if desired, by contacting the BJC Facilitator by email (jpampush@ufl.edu).

## Some BJC Discussion Guidelines

1. What is the scientific merit of the paper and does it make a new and valuable contribution to the field? If so, what is the contribution? If not, why then was this paper published?
2. What is the theoretical framework of the study and the importance of the hypotheses tested or questions addressed? What essential assumptions do the authors make?
3. Do you understand the experimental/investigational design (controls, etc.)? How would you characterize it? Are there ways the experiment/investigation could have been improved? Did the experimental design/investigation even address their research question? Let us remember to not make perfect the enemy of good, but it is okay to make good the enemy of crap.
4. How do you find the presentation and statistical analyses of results? Does this accurately represent their findings?
5. What are their interpretations of the data and are they justified? What are the implications of their interpretations?
6. Are there alternative interpretations? Do you interpret their results differently either because of [1] a different understanding of their assumptions made in their experimental/investigational design, [2] the interpretations of their results, or [3] that there are different implications to draw from their results.
7. Did you learn anything new? If not, why did the authors write this paper? Why was this paper published?
8. Why is this article in this journal?

Here is a complementary perspective to critical thinking take from *Introduction to Physical Anthropology* 2011-2012 edition by Jurmain et al. (2012:23).

1. What data are presented?
2. What conclusions are presented, and how are they organized (as tentative hypotheses or as more dogmatic assertions)?
3. Are these views simply the authors' opinions, or are they supported by a larger body or research?
4. What are the research findings? Are they adequately documented?
5. Is the information consistent with information that you already possess? If not, can the inconsistencies be explained?
6. Are the conclusions (hypotheses) testable? How might one go about testing the various hypotheses that are presented?
7. If new research findings are at odds with previous hypotheses (or theories), must these hypotheses now be modified (or completely rejected)?
8. How do your own personal views bias you in interpreting the results?
9. Once you've identified your own biases, are you able to set them aside in order to evaluate the information objectively?
10. Can you discuss both the pros and cons of a scientific topic in an evenhanded manner?