Essay I. (4 - 5 pages – 12 font, minimum 1 inch margins)
Increasingly, archaeologists are realizing that our interpretations of the archaeological record are influenced by our own biases and beliefs. That is, two people with different world views are likely to draw different meaning from the same archaeological data set. The possibility of different interpretations has important implications both for our understanding of the past, but also for how archaeology is socially and politically situated today.

The purpose of this assignment is for you to consider how different world views can lead us to vastly different conclusions about the archaeological record.

In the movie *Myths and Moundbuilders*, we saw that five different groups: the settlers, the early 19th century archaeologists, late 19th century archaeologists, modern archaeologists, and the Choctaw Indians each had different interpretations of the mounds and their origins. As a result, they treated the mounds differently. Using what we learned in class, from the textbook, and from this movie, identify and explain how their different interpretations, which reflected their world views, led to the different treatments of the mounds.

Essay II. (5- 6 pages – 12 font, minimum 1 inch margins)
One of the fundamental goals of archaeology is to understand how past human societies worked. Artifacts, features, and their patterning provide us with clues that give glimpses into past societies. Although some aspects of the past (e.g., what people ate) leave more obvious clues than others (e.g., gender relations), it is the archaeologist’s job to figure out how the range of human behaviors might be expressed in the archaeological record. The archaeological expression of these behaviors is termed “archaeological correlates”.

In this assignment, you will be comparing the archaeological correlates of two societies characterized by vastly different social, economic, and political complexity. The Hadza are mobile hunter-gatherers with an egalitarian social structure; the ancient Cahokian society was a chiefdom supported by intensive agriculture. By comparing the archaeological records associated with these two societies, you will gain an understanding both of the range of cultural variation in human societies, and how that variation can (and can’t) be detected archaeologically.

Using information from the films *The Hadza* and *Cahokia: America’s Lost City*, the textbook, and our discussions in class, write an essay that 1) summarizes the similarities and differences between egalitarian hunter-gatherer societies and sedentary, chiefdom level societies, and 2) describes how these differences may or may not be evident and
detectable in the archaeological record. In your comparison include, subsistence patterns, settlement patterns, social and political organization, ritual, and technology. When possible, use example for illustration.

**Essay III. Summary and Critique of Journal Article. (5-6 pages – 12 font, minimum 1 inch margins)**

In the course of your education, you will be asked to write several research papers. Despite the increased reliance by students on the Web as a source of information, research articles in refereed journals remain one of the most important sources of reliable information on a topic.

In general, there are two kinds of journals that provide information on archaeology: popular magazines and scholarly journals. Popular magazines can be distinguished by the presence of numerous advertisements and articles with few or any cited references. Articles are reviewed by the magazine editor for clarity and style, but not for the details of the content. By contrast, advertisements in scholarly journals are usually limited to announcements about scholarly books, and articles are replete with cited references. Most importantly, an article published in a refereed journal has been reviewed by two to five external experts on the topic of the article. These experts provide critical commentary on the paper and recommend whether the article should be published.

Refereed articles in archaeology often have a standard format. They begin with a discussion of some important anthropological concept (e.g., trade, dietary reconstruction, interpretation of symbols). This is typically followed by a description and analysis of a data set that is somehow relevant to the anthropological issue. The paper then concludes with a discussion of how the current analysis has modified our understanding of that issue.

In this assignment, you are asked to summarize and critique one of 7 research articles listed below. There are two main goals of the assignment:

- to encourage you to think critically about the way archaeologists use data to interpret past human behaviour
- to develop skills for reading/using journal articles.

To complete this assignment requires a basic understanding of the anthropological concepts we have dealt with in class, of specific archaeological techniques, and of how the two can be linked together. By spending time on one article (rather than having to read several for a “term paper”), I want to encourage you to think about the different components of an article, and how they fit (or should fit) together. This level of scrutiny should help you in the future to read other academic articles more efficiently.
Your essay should contain two parts: a summary and a critique. Consider the following components when writing each part: Address as many of these as you can (not all will be applicable to all articles).

The Summary:
- A description of the anthropological concept being addressed (e.g. the role of trade in complex societies, gender relations, the importance of ritual)
- The nature of the data used (how was it collected? How large was the sample size? Could the author(s) collect all the data they needed? Do the authors identify any limitations in the data set?)
- The methods used to analyze the data
- What knowledge was used to interpret the results (ethnographic information? Previous analyses?). That is, how did the author(s) make the link from the data back to the anthropological concept?
- How the interpretation led to a reconsideration of the anthropological concept.

The Critique:
- Were the data sufficient/appropriate to draw the interpretations presented?
- Do the authors adequately consider the implications of the limitations of their data?
- What other data might have been presented to augment the interpretation?
- Was the analysis appropriate for that data set?
- What other kinds of analysis could have been done?
- How clearly were the data and its analysis presented?
- What makes you agree or question the author’s interpretation of the data?
- Are the assumptions about the “meaning” of the data stated explicitly?
- Do you think the interpretation has led to a reconsideration of the anthropological concept?

Articles to be reviewed (choose one).

This is an ethnoarchaeological study of life cycles in India and how they are manifest in the remodeling of houses. The author uses this information to interpret house construction at Catalhöyük, a Neolithic site in Turkey.

This paper examines the role of regional interaction, as expressed in the exchange of status goods, in societies of intermediate social complexity.
   This article discusses different model of exchange and their implications for understanding social and economic relations among the Fremont people of the Great Basin, western U.S.

   This article is a bit longer than some of the others, but is written really well. It examines the archaeological correlates of emerging social complexity in southern Mexico.

   This article explores the role of women in ritual among Pueblo societies by examining architecture in Southwest sites.

   This article includes some very basic statistical tests (chi squares), but you don’t need to understand them to understand the article. The article examines imagery of men and women on pottery to understand gender roles in Mimbres society.

   This articles explores the symbolism of “power” as it is expressed in the architecture of the Casas Grandes site.

** These articles can be downloaded from the Web via the SFU library site (Library ➔ electronic journals ➔ search journal name provided). Copies of all articles are on reserve in the library.