

OVERLOOKED ARCHAEOLOGY (4-week course, Spring 2021).
Sarah Wisseman (suwissem@gmail.com)

Course description: Hollywood archaeology features spectacular discoveries of jewel-laden tombs and lost temples. In everyday archaeology, many discoveries are made far from the original site: in the laboratory, in a museum, or on a computer. Technological advances, especially in the biological sciences, make it possible to investigate everything from ancient medicine to the evolution of agriculture. New kinds of imaging and remote sensing help us read obscured texts and map roadways and underground structures. This class explores some of the odder byways of archaeology: domesticated dogs, beer-making, dental health, pleasure gardens, and locating new sites from space.

The title “**Overlooked Archaeology**” does not mean we are considering things that professional archaeologists do not study. Rather, our subject matter will be topics I have “overlooked” or barely touched on in previous Olli classes. We will also explore new research in many subdisciplines of archaeology. Think of the course like a tapas bar: a sampling of small snacks.

The following weekly breakdown shows major topics/themes in CAPS, other topics in lowercase. Depending on how much we cover during each class period, some topics may be abbreviated or shifted to the following week.

Week 1: DOMESTIC ARCHAEOLOGY: houses and apartments (Scotland, Egypt, and Italy), domestication of plants (maize and other plants in Illinois), ancient pets (Egypt and Illinois), plumbing problems in ancient Rome.

Week 2: FOOD AND DRINK: The importance of water (nilometer in Egypt, hydraulic system at Petra), ancient kitchens, cooking experiments, consumables (wine, beer, olive oil, insect repellent, chocolate).

Week 3: RECREATION, HEALTH, INDUSTRY: Recreation of all kinds, ancient nutrition, diseases (the Iceman’s ailments, mummies with heart problems, tooth decay), the ceramic industry in Italy.

Week 4: MAPPING SITES AND SACRED LANDSCAPES: remote sensing techniques (examples from Stonehenge, Italy, Egypt, Illinois), archaeology from space (featuring Sarah Parcak), the astronomical layout of Cahokia, sacred red pipestone.

**Since my lectures are image-heavy, powerpoints will not be shared on Olli’s Course Downloads (a public, non-password-protected website). Instead, after each lecture I will post key resources, websites, and video links on my blog: <http://sarahwisseman.blogspot.com>

Favorite magazines used for this course: *Archaeology*, *Biblical Archaeology Review*, *New Scientist*, *National Geographic*, *American Archaeology*. Also, the Science Times section of the New York Times and professional journals such as the *Journal of Archaeological Science*, the *American Journal of Archaeology*, the *Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology*, and *Illinois Antiquity*.