

ARCH/PHYS LUNCH TALK

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 8, 12:30PM
SOC SCI 1, 261



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BIOARCHAEOLOGY OF THE EVERYDAY

Bioarchaeology, the excavation and examination of human skeletal remains, offers unique insight into the lives of ancient populations. My research addresses the reconstruction of everyday activities, such as workload and diet, in the past. More specifically, I investigate how the daily lives of Ancient Nubians changed with the rise and decline of the colonial Egyptian Empire during the New Kingdom (*ca.* 1550-1070 BCE) and Third Intermediate/Napatan (*ca.* 1070-700 BCE) Periods. The archaeological site of Tombos, located at the Third Cataract of the Nile River, is an excellent context to study this because it was built as an Egyptian colonial center but was home to both foreign Egyptians as well as indigenous Nubians. Using enthesal changes and osteoarthritis as proxies for physical activity, I found that manual labor likely decreased during the colonial period and increased during the post-colonial period; one explanation for this is that the strong centralized power of the Egyptian Empire may have facilitated trade networks and promoted specialized communities. Additionally, using carbon and nitrogen stable isotope analysis, I found that dietary indicators suggest that Nubians began eating more Nubian foods as Egyptian power decreased and might be an indicator of social identity.