**Objective:** Students will think about the relationship between material objects and social identity (gender, ethnicity, class, vocation). Archaeologists very often take artifacts and try to infer the social lives of the people who once used those objects.

**Object Biography**

Students will take an object (preferably take it into the class, like show-and-tell), any object that they have, and talk about it in class.

The object will be discussed in terms of its

Short history (life)

-- **Production** (birth): How was that object made/manufactured? Using what material, by whom?

-- **Use** (life): How do you use that object? In what social setting (do you use it in a group, do people see you using it)?

-- **Discard** (death): basically, when do you stop using that object? Where and when do you throw it away? Where will it ultimately end up (in a trash dump)?

Long history (genealogy)

-- **Past**: what is the history of this kind of object? For example, if you brought a backpack, what is the history of “the backpack”? When were backpacks invented?

-- **Present**: what is the meaning of this object now, in contemporary society?

-- **Future**: how will this type of object change in the future? Will people stop using it, will they make new versions of it, or will they keep it exactly the same?

**Identity**

Putting this all together -- how does this object reflect you as a person? Do you use this object to communicate your identity? How might other people perceive you when you use this object?

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Infant Burials And Decapitated Men In Ancient Teotihuacan Neighborhood Reveal Diverse Origins

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